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THE HUSBAND-HUNTER.

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PREPARING FOR PUBLICATION,

In Three Volumes, Post 8vo.

HUGH TALBOT,

A ROMANCE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

By DENIS IGNATIUS MORIARTY, Esq.

THE HUSBAND-HUNTER;

OR,

“ DAS SCHIKSAL.”

BY

DENIS IGNATIUS MORIARTY, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF “ THE WIFE-HUNTER.”

“ Tell the politic arts
To take and keep men's hearts ;
The letters, embassies, and spies,
The frowns, the smiles, and flatteries,
The quarrels, tears, and perjuries,
Numberless, nameless mysteries !”

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THE HUSBAND-HUNTER;

OR,

“ DAS SCHIKSAL.”

A Tale.

CHAPTER I.

Now westlin' winds and slaughtering guns,
Bring Autumn's pleasant weather ;
The moorcock springs, on whirring wings,
Among the blooming heather ;
Now waving grain, wide o'er the plain,
Delights the weary farmer ;
And the moon shines bright, when I rove at night,
To muse upon my charmer.

BURNS.

It was late in the autumn of 1832 that a traveller slowly paced his horse through the glen of Lisnadinish, in the southern province of this wild, half-cultivated kingdom of Ireland.

VOL. I.

B

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From his gentleman-like appearance and equipments, and the aristocratic blood which his noble steed displayed, as well as the easy rate at which he advanced, he bore no resemblance to the class of tourists yclept "commercial travellers," who usually speed along "*summá diligentíá*;" that is, to borrow the translation of a college wit, on the top of a mail-coach; or diligence. Our hero, on the contrary, had none of the dapper, business-like air, which in general distinguishes that erratic and useful community; his appearance seemed to indicate the gentleman, travelling solely for his own proper gratification. A servant rode behind him, on a stout, well-built hackney.

The southern verge of the road overhung, in many parts, a rugged and precipitous bank, at whose foot brawled a rapid sparkling mountain stream; on the other side of which arose the broad shaggy breast of Lisnadinish hill, completely covered with dark purple heath. The

road, on emerging from this noble gorge, gradually ascended for upwards of two miles through a bleak, yet not uninteresting district ; until it reached the eminence which commands the rough valley of Glen Minnis.

Here our traveller involuntarily paused, in admiration of the striking scene that was stretched before him. Trees there were none in the district, and the heathy covering of the hills betrayed no marks of the advancing season. In the centre of the vale stood the tall castellated tower of Glen Minnis: the yellow moss and lichen that covered its walls, gleamed warmly in the ray of the bright autumn sun. The appearance of the ruin invited the horseman, whose taste was somewhat antiquarian, to explore it. Deeming it improbable that either his horses or the servant partook of his passion for scenery, he indulged them in such rest and refreshment as were afforded by a white-washed carman's stage on the summit of the

eminence, and proceeded alone on his ramble through the valley.

He soon discovered that the castle, or fortalice, was much farther off than he had at first imagined; and the distance was unexpectedly increased by the intervention of two brooks, much swoln from the recent rains, along the banks of which he was compelled to make a considerable *détour*, before he found the fords, whose stepping stones enabled him to cross their angry streams in safety. These obstacles surmounted, he explored the ruined tower, and finding his curiosity excited by the picturesque mountain of Mullaugh, he crossed a marshy meadow at the trifling expense of wet feet, and ascended its steep elevation.

The ascent was toilsome enough, from the alternations of almost perpendicular rocks and slimy marshes which the eastern side of the mountain presented; but our hero was young, athletic, and inured to active exercise. Having

gained the summit, the view well repaid the labour of the ascent. To the west was indeed a noble prospect. The wide blue waters of the glorious bay of Bantry, their eastern verge still gleaming brightly in the evening sun, while the western side was darkly shrouded in the shadow of the mountains, lay stretched at the distance of some miles from the hill on which he stood, although by a singular visual deception he could almost have imagined that they washed its base. He gazed at the gigantic mountain barrier that guards the bay from the western storms, and contains within its recesses the enchanting valley of Glengarriff; Hungarie Hill, with its broad, bare head; Ghoul Mountain, with its narrow, splintered peak; and all the bold eminences receding in disjointed ranks to the distant bay and river of Kenmare.

As he stood on the wide heathy summit of Mullaugh, his attention was suddenly arrested

by two white dogs, which gambolled at a little distance. One of them was a pointer; the other a diminutive and silky King Charles, only fit for a lady's warm hearth-rug, so that his appearance in a scene so wild naturally excited some surprise, especially as both he and his larger companion seemed perfectly the masters of their own motions. The wide summit of the mountain was unbroken and unsheltered for a considerable extent, so that had the dogs been accompanied by any *human* associate, our hero thought that he must certainly have seen him.

The playful animals appeared anxious to provoke a pursuit; they suffered him to approach them so nearly that they were almost within his reach; and as often as he extended his hand to caress them, the tantalizing creatures would utter a short, quick, playful bark, and scamper out of reach in a moment.

This game of pursuit and escape was con-

tinued for some minutes, until it led our hero to the brink of a very small lake, whose black waves seemed astonishingly rough, considering the smallness of its extent and the calmness of the day. Here the dogs appeared suddenly to vanish, leaving their pursuer gaping in silent wonderment. In the spirit of idle frolic, he continued his search for the wayward animals along the banks of a larger lake, which lay within thirty paces of the other little sheet of water. The chase, however, was a vain one; and our tourist began to remark that the sun was fast sinking behind Ghoul Mountain, and that, wholly unacquainted as he was with the locality, he had better lose no time in retracing his steps while light remained, to his quarters for the night in the lonely inn where he had left his servant.

While these reflections passed through his mind, he returned to the smaller lake, when incautiously advancing to the verge of the

bank, he fell through a matted canopy of heath and gorse into a little natural chasm in the ground, on the very brink of the lake, in which was a turf seat occupied by as strange a looking mortal as he ever had beheld. His person was spare, wiry, and muscular; his legs, bare from the knee to the foot, were mottled red and blue, by the influence of air, fire, wind, and rain, to all which, the luckless shins had been alternately exposed from infancy upwards. His face was dark and swarthy; its expression half sinister, half humorous. His dress was as singular as his person. It consisted of a high peaked hat, without a brim; a blue jacket, with faded scarlet seams, and tarnished gold buttons; short breeches of strong pilot cloth, and a leather belt in which was stuck a broad, sharp knife. The two dogs which had baffled their pursuer, lay panting at the feet of this personage; at his side was a large basket of provisions. He did

not testify either surprise or alarm at our hero's unceremonious entrance, but said in Irish, with the most philosophic calmness,

"That's a queer way you thought proper to come in, Sir. Now if *I* was *you*, I'd rather walk in easy at the door of a house than jump down through the chimney."

"Really, my friend," replied the intruder, in the same language, "I had not the slightest intention of making so abrupt an entrance—I thought I was standing on firm ground, and your treacherous furze gave way beneath my feet."

"And you nearly came down on my head," replied the guardian of the provision basket.

"Sir, I did not mean to make so free with your head, I assure you."

"You might have knocked my brains out," said he of the mottled shins.

"I protest," said our hero, "I should have been exceedingly sorry had I done so."

"But that would not have been the least satisfaction in life to me for the loss of my brains," replied this singular genius, tapping his forehead; "and I'll engage *you* would have been picking them up for the sake of the larning that's in them, and glad to get them too. But since they had the luck to escape, and are still in my brainpan, what say you to a glass of grog?"

The traveller gratefully accepted the offer, for the heat of the day, and his pedestrian exertions, rendered the refreshment very acceptable.

Suddenly two shots from a double-barrelled gun were heard in quick succession.

"Well banded, ould Father Jack," exclaimed Padhre, (the strangely dressed peasant,) "I'll warrant there's a brace of grouse down, at any rate."

"Father Jack?" repeated the traveller, "pray who is that?"

"My master, Sir," replied Padhre, "where did you come from at all at all, that you haven't heard of him?"

"Heard of whom, my friend? I do not know your master's surname yet."

"Father John O'Connor, Sir, parish priest of Lisnadinish; the best brother, the best friend, the best man, the best priest of a parish, and," continued Padhre, approaching the climax with increasing enthusiasm, "better than all put together, the best sportsman in all Ireland: and now, in earnest, did you never hear tell of him?"

"No, indeed, I am ashamed to say."

"Why then, ashamed you may well be! are you Turk, Jew, or Connaughtman, never to have heard tell of ould Father John, the best friend of *sowls*, and the bitterest enemy of grouse and *patricks*—Pop! there goes another bang at the grouse, I'll engage he'll have his game-bag full to-night."

"Has he any sportsmen along with him?"

"Not a Christian," answered Padhre, "barring a couple of foreigners—Englishers, they are, I think—one of them's a *donny* little crature, that would start at his shadow—got tired of walking before they got up to Cnocnabruish—he's gone back to Tom Howlaghan's cabin, the poor devil, to wait for his comrade and the priest—I never yet seen such a pair of uncivilized legs as he had—they wouldn't carry him five miles."

"And are *your* legs civilized?" demanded the traveller, laughing at this estimate of civilization, and looking at Padhre's uncouth, uncovered limbs.

"Civilized? yeh! to be sure and they are! 'These are the legs,'" and he slapped his muscular thigh with an air of triumph; "these are the legs that would trot twenty miles without stopping to take breath. But the other Englisher, to give the devil his due, is a smart,

supple chap enough, and wonderful handy at his gun."

"What are the names of these Englishmen?"

"Mordaunt, Sir—they 're brothers."

"The night is approaching, my good fellow," said the traveller, "and I am a stranger in this place: will you tell me the nearest way to Beamish's inn, where I left my horse and servant; I think I came a considerable round."

"Your shortest way is by the ould castle of Glen Minnis, and keep to the left up the little bohereen, and you'll pass both the streams at the stepping stones.—But, bluranagers! don't go till father John and the Englisher come back—they must be here now in no time—and his reverence will give you a bed with all the pleasure in life, and keadh mhile faultha*. You'd be a fool, Sir, saving your presence, to put up with no great things of a bed at

* Keadh mhile faultha—A hundred thousand welcomes.

the *Shebeen**, when his reverence will give you sheets as white as snow, and a welcome as large as a horse."

But our traveller felt scarcely inclined to depend on the second-hand invitation of Padhre, whom he deemed a sort of crackbrained humorist; and as the shades of night at length began to close around, he hastened down the mountain, in the hope of reaching the bohoreen beyond the castle with the aid of the remaining light. He was, however, mistaken, as his utmost exertions only brought him to the mountain's base, exactly as the night set in.

The day had been warm, and the evening clear and fine; but as he re-entered the large marshy meadow already mentioned, black, ominous clouds quickly chased each other over the hill tops, large rain-drops fell at intervals, the wind began to rise, and in less than half an hour

* *Shebeen*—public-house.

he found himself in the centre of the marshy plain, in total darkness, wholly unacquainted with the neighbourhood, and exposed to a drenching hurricane of rain and storm. This, indeed, was no formidable penalty for a seasoned sportsman; but his total ignorance of the locality rendered his situation extremely embarrassing. There was nothing, however, to be gained by remaining stationary; so he walked quickly onward, although he knew not in what direction he was moving.

At length he reached a tall crag at the foot of a mountain, and casting his eyes earnestly around, he could not discern the slightest spark of light in any quarter. Not a dog barked—not a sound was heard, save the howling of the wind, and the heavy patter of the rain. The mountain was a formidable barrier to any farther progress in that direction; so he faced about, and again pursued his way across the marsh, until he suddenly plunged up to his middle in a slow, muddy stream, which soaked

its oozy way through long sedgy grass and *flaggers*. Scrambling from this Stygian pool, he found himself among low, ruined walls; and advancing a few paces farther, he discerned in the gloom the tall tower of Glen Minnis. Never sailor entered harbour with more joy than he felt on entering this old, dark, ruined fortalice: all it afforded, no doubt, was shelter; but shelter was extremely welcome upon such an occasion.

Our hero was dripping wet, and, notwithstanding his constitutional strength, he soon began to experience a cold shivering; the consequence, in part, perhaps, of his being rather lightly clad. But ere many minutes had elapsed, his attention was diverted from the personal inconvenience he sustained, by the sound of voices approaching the building. They ceased; and steps, as of several persons, were heard ascending the steep rocky bank to the door of the castle. They entered the apartment in which he had taken shelter; and he

presently became sensible that they ranged themselves along the wall against which he was leaning. Some moments of silence ensued. At length one of the party asked :

“ What sort of looking fellow was that stranger ? ”

“ Troth, a good-looking fellow enough—he had as keen a pair of black piercing eyes as ever I seen—eyes, now, that would run in at one end of you, and out through the other.”

“ A pair of piercers, truly. Had he much the appearance of a gentleman ? ”

“ A gentleman every inch, I’ll go bail for him.”

At this moment the querist, who stood next our hero, happened, in changing his posture, to become aware that he occupied a corner of the building. Instantly his shoulders were enclosed in a grasp of herculean strength, and a rough voice exclaimed :

“ Who is lurking here ? ”

"A traveller," he answered, "who entered this ruin to take shelter from the storm."

"Then," returned the voice, while the iron grasp was clutched still deeper in his shoulders, "whoever you are, you shall pay dearly for this intrusion."

Our traveller struggled to release himself, but he was as a child in the powerful gripe of the Unknown.

"Padhre," he exclaimed in Irish, "strike a light."

A light was soon struck from a gun-flint in some tinder; a bit of *gewsh*, which lay in a corner of the ruin, was lighted, and disclosed the figure of a tall, patriarchal personage, with a long blue cloak, two gentlemen in shooting frocks, the eccentric and strangely dressed Padhre, and a couple of boys, who carried game bags.

"Oh!" exclaimed Padhre, recognising our hero, "there's the gentleman himself, your

reverence;—scold him now, as he well deserves, for cutting off in such a hurry before you came up.”

“ Sir,” said the blue-cloaked personage, “ all waifs and strays appertain to the lord of the manor, and in that capacity I seize upon you. You shall spend the night with me. As soon as the rain subsides, you accompany me home, and I think you will do me the justice to say that I provided a better lodging for you than you did for yourself.”

The person addressed was at no loss to guess that his peremptory friend was “ Father John ;” he thanked him for his kindness, and frankly accepted his hospitality*.

* This chapter, and one or two other portions of this work, have already been printed, with Mr. Moriarty’s permission, as detached descriptive sketches, in an Irish literary periodical, now extinct. The scenic descriptions are correct delineations of actual localities ; of which some of the real names have been retained.

CHAPTER II.

Who are you? —

SAMUEL LOVER.

“MAY I beg to ask,” said father O’Connor,
“to whom I have the happiness of speaking?”

The traveller presented the priest with his
card—“Mr. O’Sullivan.”

“Mr. O’Sullivan?” repeated O’Connor,
“O’Sullivan Bear, or O’Sullivan Reagh? or
O’Sullivan Spaniah?”

“To none of those families was he allied,”
the traveller replied; “his ancestors had long
been settled in a distant part of the kingdom.”

“ O’Sullivan Lyra, perhaps ? ” inquired O’Connor.

Mr. O’Sullivan bowed assent.

“ Then, Sir, allow me to assure you, I feel particularly happy at the pleasure of knowing you ; I was extremely intimate, for many years, with a very near relative of your’s—an uncle probably—who held a commission in the Austrian service.”

“ I am equally happy to know you,” said O’Sullivan ; “ I have often heard my uncle mention you in terms of the warmest affection.”

“ Poor fellow ! ” said O’Connor, “ *requiescat in pace*. But permit me—Mr. Mordaunt—Mr. Fitzroy Mordaunt—Mr. O’Sullivan.”

The gentlemen bowed.

“ Padhre,” said O’Connor, “ look out at the night, and see if the storm is clearing off.”

Padhre obeyed, and the English gentlemen, anxious, no doubt, to repair to more comfortable

quarters, accompanied Padhre to the door, to examine the state of the night.

“Are you long acquainted with the Mor-daunts?” asked O’Sullivan.

“Not I—I never saw them till last week;—they did not like the inn, so they beat up my quarters a few days since, with their writing boxes, portfolios, pencils, pallettes, and double-barrelled guns;—they were quite made up for writing books, taking views, and knocking down grouse and partridge. So they graciously solicited my poor aid in both their literary and sporting capacities; and you know it would not have given them a favourable impression of Irish hospitality and courtesy, to refuse their request. I accordingly escorted them to Mul-laugh, Oulteen, Cnocnabruish, Wheeough, and all our euphonious hills and eminences.”

At this moment the Englishmen and Padhre re-entered, with a dismal account of the night.

"The rain is dreadfully heavy," said the elder Mordaunt, "it would be utterly impossible to return to your house at present."

"Could we not procure good quarters in some neighbouring farm-house?" suggested O'Sullivan.

"Aye," said Padhre, "in Bonaparte Howlaghan's cabin."

"Nonsense!" cried the priest, "we are famously off where we are. The old castle is far better quarters than poor Bonaparte's tenement, whose broken thatch admits the rain;—this vault is dry enough for sportsmen, in all conscience."

Mr. Fitzroy Mordaunt did not seem to relish the prospect of spending the night in the ruin; his thoughts turned anxiously towards his comfortable quarters at Dwyer's-Gift (O'Connor's cottage).

"How far are we from Dwyer's-Gift?" said he to Bonaparte Howlaghan, a wild-looking,

athletic peasant, who had attended the shooting party during the day, and who now entered, dripping wet, with a large bundle under his cota-mhor.

“ How far from Dwyer’s-Gift ? ” repeated Bonaparte, “ why, let us see, your honour—it’s six mountains off.”

“ But pray how many miles ? ” persisted the Englishman.

“ Ogh,” replied Bonaparte, throwing down his bundle on the floor, “ we knows nothing about miles in Glen Minnis. We always reckons distance by the rocks and the bogs. We say such or such a place is three rocks away, or haulf-a-dozen bogs, or six mountains off, or something of that sort. Miles ! ’pon my conscience a man would be kicked that talked about miles in Glen Minnis, and it’s very well for *yous*, a pair of foreign jantlemèn, that you had the luck to ax a man of my edication and jintility. Miles ! arrah sure we have neither

miles nor milestones here, but the rocks and the mountains, which are Heaven's own finger-posts and landmarks, planted by the hand of nathur."

After such a sublime declaration, Fitzroy Mordaunt did not feel much inclined to pursue his topographical inquiries. But he clasped his hands, as if in admiration, and exclaiming, "Poetry! rude poetry, but genuine!" he proceeded to minute in a pocket-book the effusions of Bonaparte, whose shrewdness enabled him to guess that the English tourist was taking down his words, and who looked prodigiously important thereupon. When Fitzroy closed the book, he turned to O'Connor, and asked him if he liked poetry.

"No—certainly not," replied the priest.

"No? Are not you ashamed to confess your want of taste?"

"Why, in fact," said O'Connor, "I do not think that any idea, or sentiment, or narrative,

worth being preserved, has ever been written in poetry, which might not have been much better expressed in unpretending prose. Poetry may do very well for a song, or a sonnet, or some trifle of that sort—but for any lengthened production, the unmerciful shackles of metre, or the constant clink of rhyme, always give me a headache.”

“ Why, Sir,” replied Fitzroy, looking shocked, and contorting his brows into a fine expression of poetic ecstasy ; “ there are some ideas so ethereal, so sublime, that you cannot possibly give them utterance in prose.”

“ Then what is your definition of poetry ?” demanded O’Connor.

“ Poetry, like wit,” replied the poet, “ is exceedingly hard to define—but I think I may say that every strong emotion, every overwhelming sensation, is poetry.”

“ Then hunger is poetry,” said the priest, “ for it is a pretty overwhelming sensation—

and I am a poet at present, for I wish I had my dinner."

"Hunger is cursed bad poetry," said Bonaparte; "I'd rather have a pratee and salt herring than as much of that sort o' poetry as ever you could give me."

"I wish we were snugly housed at Dwyer's Gift," said the elder Mordaunt.

"I wish so too," echoed his brother, shivering, and looking perished.

"Pooh! we shall all do very well where we are, in a very few minutes," said the priest; "Boney, where's the gewsh?"

"The boy's bringing it, your reverence," answered the gigantic peasant.

And presently a ragged urchin made his appearance, bearing a large bundle of gewsh, or bogwood, on his back, which in less than five minutes was ignited into a blazing mass of light and heat, that diffused its cheerful warmth through the ruinous old vault. Bonaparte

untied his bundle, containing some cloaks of comfortable frieze, which the sportsmen wrapped around them while they dried their garments at the gewsh fire: the clothes were soon dried, and resumed by the party, who immediately turned their attention to the cravings of appetite, which the labours of the day had rendered pretty keen.

Meanwhile the wind howled, the rain resembled a waterspout, intermingled with occasional volleys of hail-shot: as the storm raged without, the Mordaunts appeared to enjoy the increasing comforts of the vault; and while Fitzroy became again busily engaged with his pocket-book, his wiser brother, and the priest, undertook to cook for the party. The game-bags were full, and the other provender was excellent and plentiful. Father John washed and dried the grouse. He produced his sporting stewpan, and placed on the bottom of it some slices of his own Glen Minnis bacon, half fat, half lean,

the fat as transparent as mother-o'-pearl. Upon this foundation he deposited his grouse, breast upwards, sprinkled them with flour from his dredging box, threw in a few shredded shalots, along with three tablespoonfuls of mushroom catsup, and half a tablespoonful of walnut catsup; he added a wineglassful of port, a pinch of red pepper, and some salt. Mordaunt eyed his preparations with manifest delight and admiration.

"Oh, Sir," said the priest, interpreting his looks, "I am perfectly *au fait*; I assure you, in the sporting cuisine."

Mordaunt, emulous of Father John's skill, manufactured a brace of hares in glorious style; he cooked away with his little apparatus in a manner which no novice could have imitated, and the two stewpans simmered, sputtered, and hissed upon the fire in merry rivalry.

Bonaparte's mouth watered, and his jaws expanded into a grin, at all this goodly

whizzing and sputtering—at length his feelings found utterance.

“*That’s the real music!*” he exclaimed,—
“hunger may be poethry, but give *me* the
chirruping of the pot.—By gosh, Mr. Poet, *my*
music is betther than *your* poethry.”

Fitzroy felt angry at this uncouth familiarity ;
but he shrank from exhibiting his displeasure,
when he looked at the mighty bone and muscle,
thew and sinew, of the colossal speaker. In
truth, a lurking expression of subdued ferocity
about Boney’s eye, induced Fitzroy to court his
good opinion ; for which purpose he com-
menced, while arranging some sketches in his
little portfolio, a song about Daniel O’Connell,
to the tune of Patrick’s Day in the Morning :—

“ Come gather around, while I sing you the praises
Of one who is dear to each Irish heart,
O’Connell, whose native nobility raises
One light in our land, though all else depart.”

He continued to mince out two or three

verses, and then stopped, from failure of memory. "Ogh," exclaimed Howlaghan, "your cramped English throat was niver made for Irish music—yout can't drive out the *keöl**, in the slashing, dashing, tearaway, burn-the-world style that a song about Daniel O'Connell ought to be drove out;" and forthwith Boney proceeded to exemplify his lesson with a stentorian strength of lungs that astonished his auditors. The musician seemed strongly excited by the spirit of his melody, for towards the close of his song he assumed an attitude of bold defiance, and menacingly shook a huge oak stick, which was loaded at the end with a knob of lead.

"Come, come, Boney," said Father John, laughing, "you must not shake *Baus gaun Saggart* at us—I never like to see you

* Music.

wheeling it about; it looks as if mischief was brewing."

Fitzroy Mordaunt, struck with the formidable appearance of the weapon, inquired its name and use, with the purpose of transferring to his book a drawing and description of it, "under the head of *Irish weapons*."

"Pray, Mr. Awlegan," said he to Boney, "what is the use of your large stick, may I ask?"

"To thrash rascallions wid, and smash their skulls!" roared out the giant Boney—(I should rather say the *Boney* giant)—and he spoke with the zest of an ideal slaughtering match.

"Bless me!" ejaculated the soft voice of the little Englishman, what a formidable purpose! Now, *ow* do you use this heavy stick, Mr. Awlegan? I can *ardly* lift it."

"This way!" shouted Boney, whirling the

stick a dozen times round the querist's head, with such force as to whirr through the air like a whole covey of partridges rising. Fitzroy's terror was excessively diverting. He crouched and cowered, and at last exclaimed,—“ I request you may not smash *my* skull, Mr. Awlegan.”

“ Niver fear,” responded Boney, flinging down the stick; “ I only thought you 'd like a thrifle of instruction, my boy.”

“ Oh, thank you, Mr. Awlegan—I'm sure I am much obliged—much obliged, indeed. What do you call the weapon, Mr. Awlegan?”

“ Is it the stick?” answered Boney; “ why I calls it “ *Baus gaun Soggarth*” (with a most ferocious expression and attitude), “ which means, d'ye see, death without clargy.”

“ Death without clergy!” exclaimed Fitzroy; “ bless me, very characteristic—very ferocious, I meant to say. May I ask you, Mr. Awlegan, to repeat its Irish name once more?”

"The throuble's a pleasure," said Boney, exceedingly gratified at the interest excited by his implement of war. "Baus gaun Soggarth, Sir, is the name of him."

"Bosken sogga! bless me! Thank you, Mr. Awlegan;" and down went a drawing of the stick into the book, and the formidable name, as well as the writer was able to catch it.

The cooks had now completed their culinary labours, and Padhre proceeded to spread a cloth on a table which had been brought from Bonaparte's dwelling. The table had improved by the transit, for the heavy rain had washed it clean; a purification which, in all probability, was of rather rare occurrence. •

"Come, gentlemen," said Father John, "take your seats." The party accordingly seated themselves on gewsh logs round the table, and the priest said grace.

"Ah, my defunct flutterer," said Father

John, apostrophizing a grouse which he carved, "to *my* taste you look far more picturesque *en grillade*, than when you were winging it to-day over Wheeough mountain."

"How do you pronounce the name of that mountain?" asked Fitzroy.

"Wheeough," replied O'Connor, with a strong guttural accent.

"Wee-aw, Wee-aw — Is that it?" said Fitzroy.

"No—not half guttural enough."

"I'll tache you, Sir, if you plase," interposed Boney, who stood behind Fitzroy's seat; "just whistle, as if you were calling in your black setting spaniel bitch."

Fitzroy took Boney's advice; and the effort thus made afforded him more practical instruction in bringing the aspirate into operation, than his own obtuser genius would ever have devised.

Dinner now occupied the sole attention of priest, poet, traveller, and sportsman; and conversation was suspended by the eager assiduity with which they assailed the good things that smoked before them. All was quiescent for several minutes, when suddenly the report of a gun was heard outside the castle walls, and a ball, which entered at a loophole, whistled over the heads of the party.

“Heaven defend us!” exclaimed Fitzroy Mordaunt, starting up, “we shall all be murdered.”

“Pooh, never mind it,” said Father O’Connor; “it’s nothing in life but a little rebellion, may be, or some such thing. Finish your sherry, man! I’ll engage that wild wag, Boney, fired the shot just to help your digestion; it’s twice as good, a start like that, as one of Hunt’s dinner pills.”

As O’Connor spoke, Boney, who had gone

out a few minutes before, walked into the apartment, and picking up an object which lay on the floor near the wall, exhibited a starling, which the lights and bustle had frightened from its nest in the wall, and which Boney had shot through the loophole.

“ Wasn't that nate killing ?” exclaimed Boney; triumphantly. “ I just whipped off his head with the ball, in two two's. There's a power of the cratures, Father John, fluttering hither and over about the old castle; for the boys have lit splinters above, and the birds are bothered entirely with the lights.”

This pacific explanation of the shot, which had terrified Fitzroy to such a ludicrous degree, seemed in some sort to restore him to tranquillity.

“ That's a noble view,” said O'Sullivan, “ from the top of Mullaugh.”

“ Indeed, yes; it is one of the best scenes of wild grandeur in Ireland.”

“ I think I saw a large house on a hill about four or five miles off ? ”

“ Yes—that is Knockanea, Lord Ballyvallin’s place.”

“ Lord Ballyvallin’s place ? ” repeated O’Sullivan, with rather an air of surprise, “ I had not an idea it was so near us.”

“ Do do you know Lord Ballyvallin ? ”

“ A little ; I have met him in London.”

“ You may, if you wish, have an early opportunity of renewing your acquaintance ; for Lady Ballyvallin gives a fancy ball, to which I have received a card, and have also been honoured with permission to bring any friends I pleased. The ball is an electioneering manœuvre, to acquire popularity ; but persons of all parties will go, attracted by the rarity of the scene ; such a thing has never occurred in our wild district since the days of the deluge.”

“ Attractive, indeed,” said Fitzroy.

"Would you like to come?" said O'Connor.
"I am certain that my privilege will include you both."

"We shall feel extremely happy," said Mordaunt, "if you think that our appearance will not be considered intrusive."

"Oh, not in the least; Lady Ballyvallin likes crowds, and the rooms are immense; I am sure she will think you quite an acquisition."

"I may pick up some scenes for my book," thought Fitzroy.

"Now I hope," said O'Connor, "that my going to this fancy ball may not be considered outrageously unclerical. To frequent such assemblies in London or Dublin, is totally different from going, once in one's life, to see fine folk make fools of themselves on the top of a wild hill in the country."

"I hope," said O'Sullivan, laughing, "that the Ballyvallins will not regard your acceptance

of their invitation as a pledge of political friendship, or neutrality?"

"Pshaw!" cried O'Connor hastily, "his lordship knows me of old; he knows right well I will fight it out against his party to the death, when we meet upon the hustings."

The night wore away not unpleasantly, despite the *désagréments* of the ruined castle of Glen Minnis. When Mordaunt's repeater told the hour of ten, the whole party rose to look out upon the night. The storm had fallen, the night was now dry, and the moon was rising over the hills.

"What a beautiful scene!" said O'Connor, as they stood on the grassy mound before the door of the castle.

"Down, Sir! down! down, Ponto! down, Flora! down the whole set of yees!" cried Padhre, endeavouring to get rid of the boisterous caresses of nearly a dozen dogs, who were

exhibiting their glee in various gambols, at the prospect of returning home.

"This is a scene," said O'Sullivan, "that none but a sportsman can properly enjoy."

"I believe you are right," said the priest.

"How delightful," continued O'Sullivan with energy, "to stand on this patch of smooth green grass, on a clear frosty autumn night, after a good day's sport, with your game-bags exceedingly plethoric, and your dear, faithful dogs barking and leaping in an ecstasy round you ! and the cold, clear moon sailing broad and round, high over the top of Mullaugh, and the rough, rocky fragments which lie scattered in the heath glancing white in the moonlight ; and the short, quick baying of the dogs echoing through the dark hills, which are rich with to-morrow's sport —Oh ! it is rapture ineffable!"

"Upon my word," thought Fitzroy, "that's rather prettily expressed—I'll transfer it to my book ;" and accordingly he returned to the gewsh

fire, by whose light he made an entry of O'Sullivan's enthusiastic exclamation. He also recorded in his note book, that Howlaghan acquired the soubriquet of Bonaparte, from his noted political zeal.

"Come, genteels," said Bonaparte, leading up a horse, and followed by a boy who led two others, "mount, and get home with yees."

O'Sullivan and Mordaunt mounted each a steed; Fitzroy was placed on the crupper of O'Connor's horse, and the troop sped merrily away, over hill and dale, until they arrived at the hospitable cottage of "Dwyer's Gift."

CHAPTER III.

———— Ah! whither now are fled,
Those dreams of greatness, those unsolid hopes
Of happiness? those longings after fame?
Those restless cares? those busy bustling days?
Those gay-spent, festive nights?

THOMSON.

THERE were other persons in whom the approaching festivity at Knockanea excited some anxious palpitations.

“If *my* wishes were attended to,” said Mrs. Henry Kavanagh, widow of the younger brother of a gentleman of ancient family, “if *my* wishes were attended to, Isabella should not go to the ball to-night.”

"What are your objections?" asked her brother-in-law, Mr. Kavanagh.

"Oh, I am sure some shocking accident will happen; the nights are dark, a new avenue has been opened, I hear, through the park—Lord Ballyvallen always sends off his visitors' servants to the village, where John will in all probability get drunk; so that even if we had the advantages of moonlight, and a road that one knew, we should still run the risk of being upset in the dykes."

"Well, sister," replied Kavanagh calmly, "you need not go, you know, if you do not like it."

"What! after accepting the invitation?"

"Well, you need not have accepted it."

"But that's too late to think of now—I would not have accepted it only for you."

"Only for me?"

"And I do declare I am seriously alarmed."

The fair alarmist had an inveterate propensity

to affect opposition to any family plans which she secretly wished to take effect; in order, that if their completion were attended with any unpleasant occurrence, she might refer to her prophetic objections in proof of her sagacity. On the present occasion, as was generally the case, she had suffered her daughter Isabella to overrule her opposition; but her terrors returned with full force upon the night appointed for the ball. She expressed a thousand wishes that the ball had never been thought of, and repeatedly regretted that she had not sent an apology. In vain did Isabella endeavour to allay her apprehensions; Mrs. Kavanagh was resolved to be desperately frightened, and preserved her resolution with the most unflinching pertinacity.

“I hope,” said Kavanagh, “you may be upset.”

“How cruel! thus to sport with my nervous apprehensions!”

"No, really—but an economist of fear, such as I am, cannot bear that so much excellent terror should absolutely go for nothing."

"Well, but brother, don't you remember hearing that Mr. Walton's carriage was blown down the hill on which his house stands, while waiting for Mrs. Walton to go out to dinner?"

"Certainly—and I would not by any means have you despair of being blown down the hill at Knockanea to-night."

"Oh, uncle," interposed Isabella, who thought that his sarcasm annoyed her mother, "that could not possibly happen, as the weather is perfectly calm."

This conversation was interrupted by the entrance of a Mrs. Curwen, who praised Lady Ballyvallin extravagantly.

"She is one of the most amiable beings in existence! Poor thing, she was so vexed that I did not bring Flora to see her, as soon as she

arrived at Knockanea. She reproached me so good naturedly, you haven't an idea."

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Kavanagh.

"And then this delightful fancy-ball—I can tell you, in confidence, that her ladyship gives it chiefly on Flora's account."

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Kavanagh.

"Yes—but I should not have consented to bring Flora, only that Lady Ballyvallin made it a very particular request; for I had resolved that Flora's first appearance should be made at court. However there was no refusing her ladyship, you know."

"Indeed!"

"To *you*, Mrs. Kavanagh, who have lived so much the life of a recluse, this fancy ball will afford a delightful variety. As for *me*, I have seen every thing worth seeing, over and over."

"You are fortunate."

"My sister," said Kavanagh, "had just been

expressing her fears lest the darkness of the night, and the alteration recently made in the approach to Knockanea, might occasion some accident."

"O! very likely," replied Mrs. Curwen, "young Welder's horse stumbled over a heap of stones in the half-finished avenue on Monday night, and the poor fellow's collar bone was broken."

"How shocking!" exclaimed Mrs. Kavanagh. "Isabella, my love, this is really too frightful! One would not for the world be impolite, of course—but our personal safety supersedes every other consideration—I have made up my mind; we cannot possibly go."

"Yes," said Kavanagh drily; "and I dare say when you are entering the carriage this evening, you will exclaim the very moment you are seated and driving off to Knockanea, 'I have made up my mind; we cannot possibly go:'"

and your exclamations will probably continue until your arrival there."

"But poor Welder!" said Mrs. Kavanagh, "how is he?"

"Rapidly recovering. I believe the worst part of his confinement, at least in his own estimation, is, that it suspends his attendance on the young ladies at Listrevor. He generally spends his time escorting them all day, on Arabella's unfortunate grey horse. Really I wonder how the animal survives it. The seven girls have only one horse among them, and immediately after breakfast every morning, Arabella mounts her charger escorted by Welder on his poney, and rides to the mountains: she is succeeded in turn by Miss Evelina, and Miss Celestina, and Miss Cecilia, and all the other Misses."

"What despicable gossip!" muttered Kavanagh, as he walked away to a window from his communicative visitor.

“ Lady Ballyvallin and her three daughters will form an enchanting groupe to-night,” said Mrs. Curwen; “ they personate Venus and the Graces. Her ladyship looks quite as young and as lovely as any of her daughters.”

“ I believe, Isabella, love, we *must* go,” said Mrs. Kavanagh.

“ Oh, certainly, mamma.”

CHAPTER IV.

Up springs the dance along the lighted dome,
Mix'd and evolv'd, a thousand various ways.

THOMSON.

MRS. KAVANAGH forgot the tale of terrors with which she had prepared to meet Lady Ballyvallin, from the impression produced by the brilliant scene around. Her nervous horrors vanished, as she advanced through the splendid apartments, in which luxury and taste had presided over all the arrangements. The softened lustre of the lamps; the enchanting perfume which exhaled from fragrant plants; the gay and varied colours of exotic flowers, transported Isabella, whose appearance unquestionably justified her mother's partiality, while her lovely

and intelligent countenance displayed the animation of youthful enjoyment.

Kavanagh observed that Lord Ballyvallin seemed engaged in earnest conversation with three gentlemen whom he did not know ; the groupe stood rather apart from the rest of the company.

"Can you tell me," said he to Father O'Connor, "who those strangers are?"

"Yes—they all accompanied me here—a Mr. Mordaunt and his brother ; and a gentleman whose family, at least, should not be totally strangers to *you* ; O'Sullivan Lyra."

"Ah, I know—an excellent young fellow, as I have heard—long pedigree, short patrimony. He means, I believe, to go abroad."

"I know nothing of his personal affairs ; he has been my guest for this week past, and I like him much from what I have seen of him."

"I knew his father some twenty years ago," said Kavanagh.

“Look!” exclaimed O’Connor, “look at lawyer Lucas—only look at the devoted assiduities he pays Miss Isabella—he seems to have an excellent opinion of his own attractive powers.”

Kavanagh regarded Mr. Lucas’s attention to his niece, with a smile at the self-complacent air of the legal swain. “He will tease her,” said he, “for a few minutes, and then she will contrive to get rid of him.”

“Has he any professional talent?” asked O’Connor.

“Lucas *a non lucendo*, I believe,” answered Kavanagh; “I do not know that he has yet shown any. It is a sad mishap to be rather the cleverest member of a very dull family; all the rest regard you as such a superlative genius; that your self-esteem is enormously inflated, which renders the self-confident puppy the more keenly alive to disappointment and contempt, when he finds his proper level in the world.”

“ Lucas is not quite a blockhead though,” observed O’Connor. “ He is formal and pedantic, and was always deemed an oracle at home.”—At this moment the young lawyer’s father approached Kavanagh.

“ Happy to see you, Mr. Kavanagh; one very rarely meets you on festive occasions.”

“ Indeed, Lucas, such occasions are of very rare occurrence in our part of the world.”

“ Ay—that’s precisely what my son Jonathan says; he invariably complains of the want of social feeling in this neighbourhood; he means to propose establishing a club, to bring the gentlemen more frequently together.”

“ I doubt whether such a plan of artificial sociability would succeed; if people do not visit each other of their own accord, the stimulus of a club will scarcely increase their general intercourse.”

“ And that’s what Jonathan says, too: he has doubts, though he thinks the thing worth

trying; I assure you, Mr. Kavanagh, my Jonathan always looks at both sides of a question; he is cautious, extremely cautious."

Something led the conversation to snipe-shooting—a favourite subject with Father O'Connor.

"Some sportsmen were at Coola yesterday," said Kavanagh; "I believe they were pretty successful. I had ordered the place to be preserved, but they met no opposition, as my gamekeeper was from home."

"There's magnificent snipe-shooting at Coola," said O'Connor eagerly; "the snipes get up in wisps—you need only shut your eyes and let fly—they rise in such crowds that you *can't* miss."

"The sportsmen yesterday," said Lucas apologetically, "were myself and my son Jonathan; I trust Mr. Kavanagh had no objection."

"Your son," replied Kavanagh, "is so seldom

in the country that it would be very churlish to deny him the pleasure of shooting on my grounds on his few and brief visits."

"He's a first-rate shot," said Lucas; "he always hits the swinging pigeon in the shooting gallery with a rifle ball at three hundred yards—there are few such shots."

Miss Jermyn, a rather superannuated belle, was attending to the saucy apology of Mrs. Denville, whose marriage had but recently raised her to a station that entitled her to mingle with the gay and mazy throng at Knockanea. O'Connor, a shrewd observer of everybody's foibles, felt some little anxiety to learn for what misdemeanor Mrs. Denville would condescend to apologise to Miss Jermyn.

"The reason I delayed you so long when you called," said Mrs. Denville, "was because I was engaged in fixing my diamonds, which require considerable time to arrange."

"When you are more accustomed to them,"

retorted Miss Jermyn, "their arrangement will occupy less time."

"Do you know," said Lucas to O'Connor, "that poor Denville was obliged, shortly after his marriage, to sit up at night to watch his lady's jewellery, until a safe place was constructed to store it in."

"Who told you?" asked O'Connor.

"My son Jonathan."

Kavanagh was accosted by a lady, who was

"Clad in the sombre guise of widowed weeds," while a face in which the decent sobriety of sorrow had given way to "wreathed smiles" and "witching glances," surmounted the gloomy habiliments which custom rendered necessary, as the outward demonstrations of the fair widow's regrets for her third husband. Piously resolved not to suffer the torch of Hymen to expire in the ashes of the departed, she was, *on disoit*, indefatigable in her exertions to obtain a fourth.

"Mr. Kavanagh! I did not see you till this moment! where is our dear Isabella? I have been waiting to introduce Baron Leschen to her; he has remained at my side for an hour with exemplary patience, expecting her appearance."

"Miss Isabella is talking to my son Jonathan," said Lucas.

"How kind you were to think of her," said Kavanagh, "and the Baron at your side. How did you contrive to amuse him for so long a period?"

"Indeed," replied Mrs. Mersey, "it was not particularly easy—I wanted him to try the effects of galvanism on Miss Jermyn, as it makes all old things tender; but he 'vas so shock' at the proposal that he ran away, and I believe he is now in the music room, listening to the warblings of Lady Jacintha."

"Miss Jermyn must have interested his feelings, I should think, since your remark produced so strong an effect upon him."

“ Probably ; for when I mentioned that she had got five thousand pounds, he immediately asked, ‘ if it was for de one year, or for de every year ; ’ and had it been for ‘ de every year, ’ I suspect he would have tried any experiment to galvanize her heart.”

“ Do not allow Lady Jacintha to engross him altogether.”

“ Not if I can help it—the perverse creature is my leading star to-night, although he refused to introduce me as a partner to a prodigiously grand, hairy old *Von*, who accompanies him.”

“ What plea could he urge for his refusal ? ”

“ Oh, he said ‘ his friend’s dance be stopped, for he was married. ’ ”

“ These quadrilles are not nearly as sociable dances as our old fashioned country dances,” observed Kavanagh.

“ Lady Jacintha, I think, talks of introducing a new Greek dance,” said Mrs. Mersey ; “ it

is danced at—at—let me see—I cannot recollect——”

“Have you ever seen it?” asked Kavanagh.

“Poh! how excessively provoking that I cannot at this moment recollect where they dance it,” continued the widow with an air of inexpressible annoyance.

“*I* can find out for you, ma’am, in an instant, if you wish,” said Lucas, politely pitying her apparent vexation.

“You? Sir, I am much obliged, I am sure—how can you ascertain?”

“I’ll just ask Jonathan,” said Lucas, “he knows all about Greek and the Greeks.”

“Oh, Sir, don’t trouble yourself, I beg—I shall recollect it presently, I suppose.”

“How beautifully Captain Bingham dances,” said Kavanagh, “quite like an opera-dancer.”

“No wonder,” observed Mrs. Curwen; “he learned at the battle of Waterloo.”

“At the battle of Waterloo! I fancy that

the Waterloo dances were of a very different description."

"No; he told me that Monsieur le Foudroyant, who had been a maître-à-danse, deserted from Bonaparte's army, and instructed several British officers in the intervals of the engagement."

The company were now in motion. All were dancing, walking, talking, laughing, or flirting. Fitzroy Mordaunt sauntered towards Kavanagh's groupe, and eyed the dancers through his glass with an air of nonchalance.

"You strange and silent being," said Mrs. Mersey, who had known Fitzroy in London, "you scarcely move—you scarcely speak—you scarcely smile. Do you know it is apprehended that you will become a spectre at the awful hour of twelve, which is fast approaching?"

Fitzroy Mordaunt smiled superciliously.

"Nay," said Mrs. Mersey, "that smile is not ghastly enough for a spectre."

"How can you expect him to smile," said O'Connor, "when his mind is engaged in deep and solemn contemplation of our words and deeds, which are duly noted down, to re-appear in a hot-pressed three-volume post-octavo?"

"Oh, don't put *me* in print, for pity's sake," said Mrs. Curwen.

"When does your work appear?" asked Mrs. Mersey.

"I know not," replied Fitzroy.

"Am *I* your heroine?" demanded Mrs. Mersey.

"My work will not be a novel," said Fitzroy.

"And do you suppose that *I* could not figure to advantage except in a novel? What a very impolite supposition! Your book, then, I fancy, will be 'Sketches of Society in Ireland,

interspersed with Statistical Details,' or something of that kind."

"Something of that kind," repeated Fitzroy.

"Then, my good Sir, I think you will acknowledge that a light and brilliant sketch of female character will be absolutely requisite, to relieve the sombre tedium of dry statistical information, and to impart *légèreté* to the narrative."

"If you are writing a book about Ireland, Sir," said Lucas, "allow me to inform you that I have a son whose assistance will be quite at your service—he is bred to the bar, Sir—he understands all about topography, and history, and mineralogy, and geology—and if you want a chapter about cock-fighting or horse-racing, Jonathan's your man. I wish you heard him talk."

"Heaven forbid!" thought Fitzroy.

"This fête will afford you materials for a chapter," said the widow.

"I don't know that it will," said the poet ;
"ordinary fêtes have never much interested me,
since I dined with Lord Waterford upon the
top of Pompey's Pillar."

"Observe," said Mrs. Curwen, "the ingenuity with which Mr. Langton manœuvres a partner for his daughter.—Really, Mr. Mordaunt, you should keep your eye on these peculiarities of character—look at Langton now—he is sitting next Sophia, and watching until some suitable match appears, to whom he may resign his seat."

At this moment Mr. Jervis approached, and as Mrs. Curwen predicted, Langton immediately rose and motioned Mr. Jervis to the seat he had vacated, saying, "Will you have the kindness to keep my place till I return?"

"Till he returns!" repeated Mrs. Curwen, "do, pray, Mr. Mordaunt, put that in your book; perhaps he may return in five hours, but certainly not sooner."

Baron Leschen returned to Mrs. Mersey, whom his heart perhaps reproached him for deserting, and assured her he 'would be quite happy if she would valse vid him.' The lady consented to make him quite happy, and the rotatory evolutions immediately became general.

"Do you like this whirling?" asked Mrs. Curwen.

"N—n—no," replied Fitzroy, to whom the question was addressed.

"Is it not exceedingly graceful?"

"I cannot say I think so. The only whirling I have seen, worth looking at, is that of the Dervises in the Tower of the Winds at Athens."

"Could you not introduce it here?"

"I fear not, it is too breezy; and I do not think Irish agility could achieve anything better than a clumsy imitation."

"What renders it so difficult?"

"The absolute perfection of grace which is requisite. The dancers first revolve slowly,

and their persons are as perpendicular as if they were fixed on pivots. By degrees the rapidity increases, until at length they whirl with such swiftness, that a spectator cannot possibly discern the features of their faces."

Meanwhile Mr. Jonathan Lucas, the young lawyer, had been busily rendering himself as agreeable as possible to Isabella.

"Mrs. Curwen told me," said he, "that Mrs. Kavanagh felt strongly disinclined to come this evening, but now that you *are* here, I am sure you would have regretted remaining away."

"Mamma is very timid, and as the nights are dark, and the new approach unfinished, she felt rather afraid."

"Do you know, Miss Kavanagh, that I think you have a vast deal of natural logic about you."

"Logic? Oh no! the last acquisition I should have ever dreamt of possessing."

“ That is your modesty—the remark you have just made admits of being thrown into a syllogistic form.”

“ Really ?”

“ Just observe now—danger excites alarm in Mrs. Kavanagh—that is the major proposition ; the dark night and the unfinished road, are dangerous—that is the minor ; therefore Mrs. Kavanagh felt afraid to come—that is the corollary.”

Isabella did not feel much interested in this illustration of her logical powers, and spoke of some lawsuit in which she understood that Mr. Lucas held a brief.

“ Do you think that Mr. Edmonds is in any danger of having his uncle’s will in his favour set aside ?”

“ Unquestionably not, Ma’am—his title, as I apprehend, is thoroughly impregnable ;—I would venture to defend it singly against all

the lawyers of the empire. Sir Edward Coke defines a title, in his First Institute, as follows : ‘ *Titulus est justa causa possidendi id quod nostrum est* ;’ and applying this undeniable maxim to Mr. Edmonds’s case, I defy the united faculty to deprive my client of his rightful inheritance.”

“ I am told Miss Edmonds is soon to be married.”

“ So I have heard : she is a beautiful creature, and I think it a pity she is throwing herself away on young Marsh.”

“ I believe,” said Isabella, “ you are a warm admirer of her’s.”

“ I wish I were permitted to declare admiration elsewhere.” This was said with an air of bashful consciousness, and was followed, *selon les règles*, with a sigh of ineffable meaning.

“ I would not recommend you to declare

admiration," said Isabella, purposely misunderstanding him; "unless you were previously aware that its expression would be acceptable."

"Ah! I would make love in syllogistic form!" pleaded Jonathan, in tones of the most tender pathos.

"How on earth could you manage to do so?" said Isabella, laughing at the whimsical idea of her learned admirer.

"Have I permission to give you a specimen?" said Jonathan, in accents of pathetic entreaty.

"Of a syllogism? Certainly."

"Then," said Jonathan, with eyes, voice, and manner, all taxed to the utmost to furnish a respectably amorous expression; "then *I* am the major proposition; *you*, my adorable Miss Isabella, are the minor proposition; and the consequential corollary will, I trust, with your kind concurrence, be the matrimonial ceremony, performed upon any day, at any moment, you

may do me the superlative favour to appoint. Hey, Miss Isabella? What do you think of my syllogism?"

Isabella was not even *touchée* enough to blush. She laughed at Jonathan, and said, "Your syllogism is well enough—as a jest;—but pray observe," she impressively added in a very low voice, "if you meant it seriously, I beg you may dismiss it from your mind—it would only lead to disappointment."

Kavanagh looked around for O'Sullivan, and found him in another apartment engaged in an all-engrossing and delicious tête-à-tête with the beautiful Lucinda Nugent. To Kavanagh's keen eye, it appeared from their manner to each other, that they had met before. In this surmise he was not mistaken. O'Sullivan had formerly visited at Martagon, the seat of Lucinda's brother, Colonel Nugent, and his delight at meeting Lucinda on the present occasion was enhanced by surprise. She met

him with an air of the most flattering consciousness, and taking his arm, accompanied him to a sofa, "to talk over," as she said, with bewitching simplicity, "the happy, happy days, when they used to gather shells upon the sandy shore at Martagon, and trace the woodland path together."

"Those were indeed delightful days," said O'Sullivan warily.

"Then why not renew them?" asked Lucinda in all artless kindness; "my brother, I know, will be delighted to see you;—I have heard him say a hundred times that he never loved any friend so well:—O, *do* come, Henry, and make us all so happy."

To resist so affectionate an invitation, proceeding from a being of such incomparable loveliness, was utterly impossible. And Lucinda had called him by his Christian name! No doubt she had always done so at Martagon, and their former childish intimacy jus-

tified the freedom; yet, since then three years had passed; she had shot up into womanhood, and her renewing the terms of familiar intercourse on which they had last met, was a proof of unabated affection, that afforded O'Sullivan the most exquisite gratification.

“ And is Martagon unchanged ? ” asked O'Sullivan.

“ Quite as unchanged, Henry, as the hearts of its inhabitants. My brother wanted to throw down the summer-house that overhangs the sea, and to build a new one on a larger scale, but I would not permit him to remove it. You do not forget the trouble we had in building it, Henry—a wonderful effort for children—indeed we were little more than children then :—you and the gardener were the masons, and I—wild creature that I was ! carried sticks, and mortar, for which I entailed upon myself certain serious lectures from my governess.”

“ You sometimes played mischievous tricks

upon Miss Davidson, in retaliation for her lengthy lectures," observed O'Sullivan, pursuing the full tide of reminiscence; "where is she now?"

"Poor, poor thing," replied Lucinda very feelingly, "she would have been destitute indeed, if my brother had not given her a cottage when she left us; her family refused to receive her, so we have felt it a duty ever since to contribute to her comfort as much as we possibly could."

While they thus conversed, Colonel Nugent, who was many years Lucinda's senior, approached, and cordially shaking hands with O'Sullivan, reinforced his sister's invitation by pressing his friend to spend a month at Martagon.

The Ballyvallin family played their part to all their guests with the most electioneering affability: Lord Ballyvallin shook his grey

head, and regretted to Kavanagh the days of their youth, when they both had been members of the Dublin Whig Club.

Lady Ballyvallin enchanted Mrs. Kavanagh, by expressing her admiration of the lovely Isabella; and Lady Frances, Lady Jacintha, and Lady Henrietta, took appropriate opportunities of hoping that they might frequently see all the ladies of the neighbourhood at Knockanea.

When the hour of departure arrived, Mrs. Kavanagh caught her brother-in-law's arm, exclaiming:—

“ Did I not tell you some accident would happen to-night ? ”

“ Yes, but you have frequently given me similar warnings, unattended with any result.”

“ Will not anything convince you ? I knew what would happen ! the Narevilles have been upset.”

“Of what use is your prescience, since you did not inform the Narevilles of the impending disaster? If you wish to act a friendly part, tell Mrs. Nareville that she must expect similar misfortunes as long as she continues to crowd eight people into her coach, and to drive four half-broken, blood colts full gallop down hill.”

“I hope we may reach home alive,” said the lady.

“It will not be John’s fault if we do not; for he has been drinking safe home to us for the last five hours at the village.”

Mrs. Kavanagh reproved her brother for his ill-timed mirth.

Mr. Langton, elate with the success of his manoeuvre to secure Mr. Jervis as an attendant on his daughter for the greater part of the evening, determined to try the effect of another *ruse*; and pretending to mistake

Mr. Jervis's carriage for his own, as it stood at the door, he deliberately handed in Miss Langton. But Jervis resisted this second attempt on his liberty, and very ungallantly restored the intrusive fair one to the arms of her parent.

CHAPTER V.

In these lone walls, their days' eternal bound,
These moss-grown domes with spiry turrets crowned,
Where awful arches make a noonday night,
And the *dim windows shed a solemn light.*

POPE.

"WHY so pensive, Isabella?" asked Mrs. Kavanagh, as Isabella, on the morning following the ball, rested her head in a contemplative attitude upon her hand. Isabella answered not, and her mother repeated her question.

"Ma'am!" she exclaimed,— "I beg pardon —I believe—I did not hear —"

"Well, my love, now that your attention is fixed, may I ask (for the third time), why are you so very pensive?"

“ Was I pensive, mother ? ”

“ So exceedingly pre-occupied, that you did not even hear my question :—Does any tender reminiscence of young Lucas occasion this abstraction ? ”

“ No indeed, mamma. ”

“ No, indeed ? Then perhaps you were thinking of that young Englishman who danced two sets with you—Mordaunt, I think they call him ? ”

Isabella's crimsoned cheek at once informed her mother that this last surmise was not very far astray from the truth.

“ Child ! you do not answer me—Mordaunt paid you a good deal of attention ;—I am then to conclude that his attentions were not unacceptable. ”

“ They were not, mother, ” replied the conscious Isabella, in a voice scarcely audible to an ear less interested than that of her auditress.

“ Well, my love, you act rightly, to be candid with your mother—Do you think he likes you ?”

“ It is hard for me to tell, mamma ; but his manners were very—very—how shall I express it ? they were *more* than attentive.”

“ Isabella, take care you do not lose your heart, without gaining this Mordaunt’s in return.” Isabella sighed.

“ I wish I knew who he is,” resumed her mother.

“ Mrs. Mersey knew him very well in London ; she says his family are persons of high consideration.”

“ But is he an eldest son ?”

“ I believe so.”

“ Well, in that case we will—inquire more about him.”

“ Mrs. Mersey knows every thing about him, mamma.”

“ Isabella, do you know who was that tall,

elegant looking young man, who conversed so much with Lucinda Nugent?"

"Dear me, mother! you must have been exceedingly absent! My uncle pointed him out to you twice, and told you that he was O'Sullivan Lyra, the nephew of his old friend—he means, I believe, to ask him here."

"In that case," replied Mrs. Kavanagh, "Mordaunt will have a formidable rival."

Isabella shook her head incredulously.

"Look, Isabella—some carriage is coming up the avenue—whose can it be?"

An extraordinary equipage arrived at the door, which Mrs. Kavanagh recognised as Mrs. Curwen's; it was made by her nephew, the accomplished Jonathan Lucas, and resembled a huge square leathern box, braced, buckled, and strapped in a very original manner, and was deemed *one* proof, among many others, of the original genius of its maker.

"Well," inquired Mrs. Kavanagh, when her

visitor had entered, "how did you like the fancy-ball?"

"Ah, I was sadly disappointed—had Lady Ballyvallin consulted *me*, I could have pointed out many improvements."

"What were the deficiencies?" asked Mrs. Kavanagh.

"I could not perhaps explain them to you now; but had you asked me last night, when we were both on the spot, I could easily have shown you fifty things, in which a better taste might have appeared."

"Well, I must congratulate myself on my want of taste—the scene struck me as being very brilliant."

"Perhaps," said Mrs. Curwen, "my expectations were too high; I had reckoned on a scene from the Arabian Nights, at least; but at all events Flora was greatly admired. Lord Ballyvallin asked who could have expected to see so

enchanting a creature at the foot of the mountains, like a myrtle, he said, in the regions of the Alps. Pray, Mr. Kavanagh, have you heard her sing Italian songs?"

"I have," replied Kavanagh.

"Candidly, what do you think of her style of singing?"

"Candidly, I wish she would sing in Greek, which you know is a much more sonorous language, and quite as intelligible as Italian to nine out of ten of her hearers."

"Ah, really that is a novel idea. Mr. Fitzroy Mordaunt told Mrs. Mersey last night he had got some Greek melodies, and if one could possibly manœuvre them from him, it would be quite delightful, for I *do* like to have every thing unusual and unique."

We must now transport our readers for a while to Mrs. Mersey's boudoir. This lady had been upon a visit to Martagon, and had accom-

panied Colonel Nugent and Lucinda to Knockanea, where Lord Ballyvallin had invited them to pass a few days.

The widow reclined upon a sofa, and surveyed with indolent pleasure the reflection of her graceful figure in a large toilet glass. Thoughts of the past, and visions of the future, chased each other through her mind, but she banished these intrusive visitors, and devoted the full energy of her soul to the fixed consideration of that point of time, which her general habits of thinking and acting induced her to deem the most important—namely, THE PRESENT.

“ Let me reflect,”—such was the tenor of Mrs. Mersey’s ruminations,—“ how the grand game of MAN is to be played—What cards are on the table? there is Baron Leschen with his stars and ribands, and his sixteen quarterings—can the baron be caught? He is the king of trumps. Last night the pressure of his hand was incomparably tender; but undoubtedly I

cannot yet pronounce a conquest—I shall try what a little apparent indifference will do; I will devote myself for this day to our huge, furry, hairy, snuffy friend, Prince Gruffenhausen—the hairy prince has got a very copious princess on the banks of the Rhine—n'importe—I do not want to disturb the matrimonial quiet of his Serene Hairiness—I only want to pique the baron by affecting indifference.

“ Then, should the baron, with his ribands, stars, and quarterings fail me, there is the Reverend Anastasius Montgomery Wingcote—noble family—large private fortune—an interesting repentant *routé*,—somewhat fanatical and *evaporé*; he is rather *passé*, and looks shattered, but all things considered, he might answer pretty well—he likes female preachers—admired Mrs. Fry and Alice Cambridge.

“ *I* could preach—I should certainly be altogether irresistible as a female pulpit orator. Let me see how I should dress; I think a sable

robe, which should extend from head to foot, parted over my forehead, would answer admirably; the contrast between the black muslin, and my snow-white forehead, would be extremely effective. My dark hair should be divided into two unequal bands, and a single curl should descend, as if unconsciously, to the dimple in my left cheek. Heavens! if Wingcote could but see and hear me in the pulpit! Never was a finer opening for display—and my white and beautifully rounded arm, might escape from the sable folds of my dark robe, flung aloft in the impassioned energy of oratorical gesticulation. Should other projects fail, I look upon *this* as a *certain* game—so Wingcote may be booked as a corps-de-reserve.

“ But there are others, *en attendant*, whom I certainly confess I should prefer attacking—I am strongly tempted to assail young O’Sullivan Lyra—Oh, what a husband—what a charming husband he *would* make, if I only allowed the

little blind god to gain the ascendant ! I never, never saw so sweet a smile ——”

Here Mrs. Mersey paused, as the soft remembrance of the smile suspended for a moment the course of her reflections.

“ He appears to admire Lucinda Nugent,” she resumed, “ and Lucinda is certainly beautiful ; but she wants experience, and O’Sullivan is also young, and extremely inexperienced : I think if I regularly set to work, I could conjure him away from Lucinda—but Langton says he heard O’Sullivan’s estate was much involved, and I cannot say I like involved estates—yet *if* in a moment of softness I *could* make a sacrifice, my heart too plainly tells me it would be for *him*.

“ Then there is Jervis—a desirable match in some respects, undoubtedly—but he cannot talk of anything except his regiment and the turf ; if I seriously thought of entangling his affections in love’s fairy snare, I should prepare

for the enterprise by studying the army list and the racing calendar. No—I will have nothing to say to Jervis—positively nothing—I never could tolerate a husband with such an unprecedented nose—such a crimson beak, like the tail of a boiled lobster,—and then the vision of O’Sullivan’s elegant aquiline, rising in perpetual and tantalizing contrast—oh, O’Sullivan! if my lot were cast with thine——

“ But O’Sullivan cannot make me a baroness; and then an encumbered estate is unpromising—and Leschen is abundantly good-looking.

“ How *shall* I manage to achieve the Baron? Alas! I am timid, retiring, and incapable of attempting those prodigious master-strokes with which other women have not hesitated to conquer all obstacles. Albertina Gruffenhauseu loved the young Count Klaukenberg—he had sailed in a steam-boat down the Rhine to escape the unpleasant predicament of seeing daily marks of an attachment he never could return—

Albertina's brother pursued, overtook, and brought him back in triumph.—He induced him to enter a solitary summer-house with Albertina, who locked the door, and brandishing a lighted torch, informed him that a train of gunpowder had been laid in the apartment, and that she would blow up the house that instant, if he did not consent to an immediate marriage. The Count was terrified into compliance. Now, really I never could do such a thing, to become Empress of Austria.

“ But the Baron—*how* to achieve him ! Lady Jacintha would be a useful confederate, if her ladyship could be trusted, which I fear would be a very equivocal chance. But—*alerte à la muraille*—I linger unnecessarily here—I must play my game according to circumstances.”

And the widow started from her sofa, and dressed to accompany a party who were going to explore the ruins of the abbey of Kilconnel. She was as yet undecided respecting the tactics

she ought to adopt; she hesitated whether to appear wholly engrossed by Prince Gruffenhause's conversation, or to seem fascinated by the charms of Leschen's broken English, when she reached the drawing-room where the Baron, the Prince, Lady Ballyvallin, and Lady Jacintha, were seated.

"Dat ruins of Kilconnel," asked the Baron, "is it goot distance off?"

"I believe three or four miles," replied Lady Jacintha.

"Ach! but it is grand large ruins, is it not?"

"Pretty large, indeed; but extremely inferior to your beautiful ruins at the Schloss Leschènhaus."

"Are we soon to set out?" asked Mrs. Mersey.

"I believe soon—whenever you please—has the carriage been ordered, mamma?" asked Lady Jacintha.

“ No—but I did not think we were to have it—prince Gruffenhausen’s vrowtchsk will take four persons—will it not ?”

“ It does takes four beoples, madame,” said the Prince.

“ Bah ! it is not so pleasant and goot and delightful half at all to dravel in, as my German cabriolet,” said Leschen.

“ But your cabriolet only holds two,” said Mrs. Mersey.

“ Ach ! mine goot honour and wort,” said the Baron, in a very low tone of most promising tenderness, “ but I do tink dat is not an great disadvandages, not at all.—Dere are sometimes occasions, mein goot lady, when two beoples like to make much talk wid each oder dat dey would not wish—mine heafens ! no !—dat any oder one should hear.”

“ Most true,” answered Mrs. Mersey sighing, and with a modest, downcast, widowed glance.

"Haf I not said true?" pursued Leschen, tenderly.

"Indeed you have," replied the widow, in a tone of exquisite softness.

"Which do you prefer, the vrowtchsk or the cabriolet, Mrs. Mersey?" asked Lady Jacintha, from the other end of the room.

"The cabriolet, certainly," answered the widow.

A footman now announced that both cabriolet and vrowtchsk were ready. Mrs. Mersey saw with pleasure Prince Gruffenhausen attend Lady Ballyvallin and Lady Jacintha to the vrowtchsk, into which he handed them; his serene hairiness still lingered on the gravel, as if expecting Mrs. Mersey would follow. Baron Leschen with infinite politeness assisted the widow to ascend the elevation of his airy cabriolet; she seated herself, and looked around in triumph, when Lady Jacintha provokingly called

Leschen, who attended her summons with apparent alacrity.

“ Come in the vrowtchsk with us,” said her ladyship. Leschen bowed, and turning to Gruffenhausen, said,

“ Mon prince, vil you haf de gootness to do me de honor to do yourself de habbiness to drive Mrs. Mersey ?”

“ I shall do so, mine goot baron, wid great habbiness,” replied the hairy man, and forthwith he ascended the cabriolet, took the reins, and flourished the whip, to the inexpressible chagrin of Mrs. Mersey, whose utmost efforts were put in requisition to conceal the vexation she felt at her very unexpected consignment to the care of Gruffenhausen.

Lord Ballyvallon’s coachman, an experienced whip, drove the vrowtchsk, (an *outré* sort of carriage, of Russian construction ;) while Gruffenhausen was detained for a quarter of an

hour by the efforts of a stupid groom to arrange some refractory bearing-rein. When the groom had settled the rein, his serene highness, emulous of the speed with which the vrowtchsk advanced, lashed on his steeds, to the infinite terror of the widow, whose alarm was increased by observing that her serene Jehu was exceedingly awkward and unskilful in his new vocation. Terrified and provoked, she still retained her usual sense of the ridiculous, and on Gruffenhausen's bumping the wheel, to the imminent danger of their limbs, over a solitary stone that encumbered the centre of the road, she could not help saying,

“Your serene highness is an excellent marksman.”

“Pofe!” returned the imperturbable man of hair, who thought she intended to compliment his skill as a sportsman, “you do joke, madame; I haf nefer been consider no goot marksman, not at all.”

"But I think you an excellent one," returned the widow, "for there was only one stone on the road, and you hit it."

"Pofe!" said the serene man; and observing that the vrowtchsk having now attained the bottom of a distant hill, was advancing at an increased speed, he whipped his horses furiously down the declivity, and the cabriolet swung, and rattled, and bumped, over the inequalities of a steep and rather ill-repaired road.

"For heaven's sake, do not go so fast," implored Mrs. Mersey, "we shall be upset."

"My vrowtchsk is going fery vast, and I do wants to be at dose great ruin as soon as milady Ballyfallin."

"Oh, we shall be there time enough—you will certainly upset us."

"Pofe! dat may not be no harm not at all—I upset de Princess Klinkerbergenbüttel and de Countess Starenhaus, two times, on de

road from Bälz to Ehrenbreitstein, and der was not von bone in deir body vas broke."

"But we might not be equally fortunate."

"Bah! you do not understand de great and weighty and ponderous mystery of de Fatalism—" (Here the vehicle was nearly overturned, from the headlong speed with which Prince Gruffenhausen thundered over some deep ruts, which the greater skill of lady Ballyvallin's coachman had enabled him to avoid; Mrs. Mersey screamed in vain—) "de grand and ponderous mystery of *die vorher bestimmung*," continued his serene highness in a tone of the most philosophic placidity: "Ach! mine goot Misdress Mersey, if Fate haf wrote in her book that we *are* to be upset, dere is noting in de world dat could hinder us to be upset—mine heafens! no—if I drivēd dis cabriolet as slow as de snail do creep. But, mine wort —"

“ I implore your Serene Highness to keep out of the way of that heap of broken stones.”

“ But, mine honest wort! if Fate haf wrote in her book dat we are *not* to be upset—mein heiligkeit! we would be quite safe, Misdress Mersey, if I drived dis cabriolet as fast as de grand Peolphon, whose fader was de lightning and his moder de east wind. Ach! you haf not been instructed in the grand and mighty secrets, Misdress Mersey; but I can insdruet you”—(here the whip smacked and whistled afresh about the sides and ears of the prancing horses). “ Our destiny is wrote bevore we see de light, and, mein himmel! it is not in our powers and our hands to change it.”

Mrs. Mersey now gave up remonstrance as useless, and threw herself back in her seat, awaiting the result with a feeling of agonized despair. His Serene Highness continued to thunder along, in defiance of all ordinary chances

of overturns and dislocation, as if for the purpose of ensuring Mrs. Mersey's recollection of his lesson in fatalism, should she have the good fortune to survive the present excursion. It was true, that the carriage conveying Lady Ballyvallin speeded along with nearly equal rapidity; but then her ladyship possessed the advantages of much more manageable horses, and a skilful coachman, who was not a fatalist.

Every stone, or inequality, that deranged the smoothness of their rapid course, only elicited from Prince Gruffenhausen the contemptuous exclamation of "pofe!" At a narrow part of the road, several carts impeded his impetuous career, and his highness's philosophy had given way to a somewhat irate state of feeling long before he was able to extricate his cabriolet. When at length he succeeded in doing so, he again lashed his horses, to urge them to overtake the vrowtchsk, which had now gained the abbey cemetery;

the animals became utterly unmanageable; they pranced, kicked, plunged, and finally set off in a tremendous gallop, which continued till they reached the ruined abbey of Kilconnell; where, rushing to the side of the road, they overturned the cabriolet against a low stone enclosure, and Mrs. Mersey was pitched into the expanded arms of Baron Leschen, who, with his fair convoy, had just descended from the vrowtchsk. "I believe, Baron," said Lady Jacintha, "you are the first philosopher who ever caught a falling star."

"Good heavens! is she seriously hurt?" asked Lady Ballyvallin, coming forward to examine the sufferer.

"Pofe!" cried Prince Gruffenhausen, getting up and shaking himself, "she did not fall against der stones—It vas wrote in de Book of Destiny dat she vas to get dis oberturn—Mein heiligkeit! she almost knock down poor Leschen!"

"I dare say," whispered Lady Jacintha to her mother, "Mrs. Mersey would have no objection to fifty upsets, provided they were all to end like the present, in the Baron's arms."

Lady Ballyvallin was assiduously applying salts to the nostrils of the fainting widow, which pungent application at length elicited a sneeze. Still, however, she looked miserably pale, her eyes were closed, and she spoke not. An attendant brought cushions from the carriage, and laid them on the grass, for her accommodation; but her arm was so firmly clasped round Baron Leschen's neck, that it was impossible to disengage her from him, even although she continued apparently insensible.

Her insensibility seemed so pertinaciously resolved to resist all efforts to dispel it, that Lady Ballyvallin, who felt much curiosity to

survey the ruins, deemed it useless to wait any longer in the hope of Mrs. Mersey's revival; and, taking Prince Gruffenhausen's arm, "Come," said she, "Jacintha may remain with Mrs. Mersey, if she wishes—some of our friends are here already, I perceive—let us join them."

"Oh, mamma," said Lady Jacintha, "I will go too."

Her ladyship accompanied Lady Ballyvallin and the Prince into a neighbouring cloister, where, separating from her party on some trifling pretext, she looked through a loop-hole at Mrs. Mersey, who had opened her unparaleled eyes, and was gracefully, yet faintly, thanking Baron Leschen for his attention.

"But, oh!" she suddenly exclaimed, shrinking from him with a look of horror, "we are left ALONE! What will the world say—what will be thought of me, when it transpires? oh!"

what *will* the world say? I cannot endure the idea! why did you allow every creature to leave us?"

And Mrs. Mersey supported herself against a tombstone, in pitiable agitation. Leschen seemed exceedingly perplexed how to answer such a startling appeal, or how to soothe her modest perturbation. He walked over to a monument, at some little distance, and appeared intently engaged in an effort to decypher the inscription.

"Baron Leschen," said the widow, "how can you possibly be so much engrossed by the dead, when the living demand your attention and sympathy?"

"I beg tousand pardon—but I tought you vas shock at my being too near you—Dis is curious tomb—I tink I haf read of dis tomb in some history."

"Cruel man! it would not be amiss if you

were under it. But what can at this moment make it so interesting?"

"I do try to make out dis inscription, which is all about—I do tink—is all about—all about—a tale—of murder."

"A tale, indeed! but nothing to the tale of modern times, which will ring through the world, when my having remained alone here with *you* becomes generally known.—Oh! I shall never survive it!" And Mrs. Mersey wrung her snowy hands in agony.

"Vat shall I do, Misdress Mersey?"

"What shall you do? Ask your heart, inhuman! what you *have* done—you invited me to take a seat in your cabriolet, and when I accepted it, you handed me over to the care of Prince Gruffenhausen, who is certainly possessed with a devil, and who narrowly missed killing me."

"I vas shocking wrong, to be sure," said the

Baron, deeply penitent, and approaching the interesting widow with a look that seemed earnestly to deprecate her displeasure: "I was shocking wrong, Misdress Mersey, but vat could I do, when milady Jacintha ask me to go into de vrowtchsk?"

"What could you do? You might have told her that you could not leave *me* to the tender mercies of Prince Gruffenhausen, you might have told her——"

What further suggestions Mrs. Mersey was going to make, we do not know; for just at this moment Lady Jacintha, who had watched the whole dialogue from the loop-hole in the cloister, and who felt alarmed at the tender penitence displayed by Leschen, suddenly appeared, to terminate a colloquy which the widow's address might possibly have rendered rather a dangerous one.

"I flew back," quoth her ladyship, "to inquire how Mrs. Mersey is—I am delighted to see she has revived."

"Thank you," faintly articulated the widow.

"Are you sdrong enough now, mein goot lady," said the Baron, "to walk among de ruins?"

"I will try," she answered, rising from her cushions with the aid of the tombstone, against which she had reclined. Leschen could not avoid offering her his arm, on which she leaned as heavily, as if she meant, by doing so, to impress upon his mind how much she required his assistance and sympathy. Lady Jacintha continued to address to the Baron her voluble remarks on the building.

"Now that tower, the most perfect remnant of the abbey, is one of the best specimens that I have ever seen of the monastic style in Ireland. Look, Baron, at the old grey battlements; the genuine ecclesiastical battlements, and the crocketed pinnacles. I wish we could discern the arms on that ancient 'shield; it is not easy at this distance."

“ I think they are the arms of the M‘Carthy,” said Mrs. Mersey, steadily surveying the shield, which surmounted a window in the second story ; “ a stag *courant*.”

“ Now *I* could not possibly discern that,” said Lady Jacintha ; “ these seem to be wonder-working ruins, for they have restored Mrs. Mersey’s sight. She has quite forgotten to use her eye-glass, and yet she decyphers a rude, old, moss-grown shield.”

Mrs. Mersey searched for her eye-glass in dignified silence, while Lady Jacintha endeavoured to assist her recollection by observing, that perhaps Baron Leschen might know where it was ; that it possibly had fallen from her reticule during her fainting fit—that perhaps it might be found among the cushions upon which she had reclined.”

“ I haf no knowledges about it, not at all,” said Leschen ; “ I haf not seen it dis day.”

Mrs. Mersey put an end to Lady Jacintha’s

officious suggestions, by saying, that she now recollected having left the eye-glass that morning on her dressing-table.

They ascended a spiral staircase to a broken doorway, that commanded the interior of the ancient church : beneath a distant arch appeared another groupe.

“ Does your ladyship knows who are dose beoples ?” asked Leschen.

“ Not at this distance,” replied Lady Jacintha ; “ but perhaps Mrs. Mersey, whose sight is so peculiarly acute to-day, may recognise them.”

“ I think I do,” said the widow, with great sweetness, which she intended should *tell*, as contrasted with her ladyship’s sarcastic manner. Nor was she wholly mistaken in her calculation, for Leschen, struck with the contrast, was surprised into the mental ejaculation of, “ Sweed, goot creature.”

“ I think,” pursued Mrs. Mersey, “ that the

gentlemen are your guests, Colonel Nugent and Mr. O'Sullivan; and the lady is the beautiful Lucinda. Oh, Baron! She is a most lovely being, is she not? You *must* admire her as much as I do."

"She is beautiful lady, certainly—very beautiful. She is going to draw pictures of the abbey, I do think—see, she has her paper stretched out before her."

The Baron was right: Lucinda, whose accomplishments had all been improved to perfection, was proceeding to sketch the picturesque and broken aisle.

"How gracefully," said she, "the ivy twines its winding spray, as if to conceal the ravages of time upon this desolate fabric! what a subject for a painter! Henry," she continued, addressing O'Sullivan, "you will be so kind to fold your arms, let your hat rest negligently on the grass at your feet, and lean your back against that shattered pillar—a scene such as

this is much improved by figures, and I must put *yours*," she said with a bewitching smile, "in the foreground of the groupe. Nay, now," she added, starting up, "you are awkward—you must allow me to arrange your attitude; fold your arms thus—there—that will do—look upwards—a little more—more—that will do—as if you were gazing on the

‘ Old solemn, royal Night,
That wraps her purple round the Stars august,
As though she called them children *.’

So far very well—cross your feet—oh, you can surely do *that* without my assistance. Sir, your attitude is quite too constrained for a picture—do throw a little more ease into it.”

“ Lucinda, it is very hard to please you.”

“ Well, well, Henry,” she answered, laughing, “do as you like yourself. There, now—

* Lady Emmeline Stuart Wortley.

Oh! that is really majestic—just remain as you are, and look exceedingly contemplative. Now, brother, I want *you* to frown over Henry's shoulder—yes, that will answer very well—I will make a monk of you—patience, now—patience for a very few moments.”

And Lucinda sketched with taste and scientific accuracy, the arches, the pillars, and her little groupe, carefully preserving the awful and mysterious frown of Colonel Nugent, whom she metamorphosed into a monk, by enveloping his figure in monastic robes, and depriving his head of its dark brown curls.

“Do you wish,” asked Colonel Nugent, “to introduce a wild, hyperborean satyr into your sketch?”

“Not in character,” answered his sister.

“For if you do, just look up to the arch upon your left.”

Lucinda looked up, and beheld the Serene Fatalist staring at her labours through the

uncouth and frizzled mass of hair with which his visage was encumbered. When he saw he had arrested her notice, he walked off, uttering a supercilious "pofe!" at the unimportant nature of her occupation.

"Really, sister," said Nugent, "I can't stay frowning here all day to suit your convenience—I think I have frowned enough now—I want to speak to Leschen, who, I think, has just descended the stairs of that tower with Lady Jacintha and the Mersey."

"Well, go—go by all means—I do not want you any longer."

Thus dismissed, Colonel Nugent went to join the Baron, leaving Henry and Lucinda alone.

"Have you finished *me* yet?" asked Henry.

"Oh, yes—quite—come and see how you look on paper."

Henry accordingly stooped down to look at Lucinda's drawing, and was struck with the accurate resemblance of his features and form,

which the fair artist had contrived to impart to the very diminutive sketch to which the limited proportions of her drawing constrained her.

“ Will you give me this drawing when it is finished ?”

“ No, Henry—do not ask me : I shall keep it myself.”

“ Will you ever gaze upon *this*,” (pointing to his own figure in the groupe) “ when the original is toiling under Indian suns ?”

“ What—what do you say, Henry ? Indian suns ? You surely are not thinking of going to India ? or did I hear you aright ?”

“ Even so, Lucinda,” answered O’Sullivan, in a tone of solemn and melancholy determination. “ If I were possessed of wealth, or even of a moderate competence *at home*, I never should wish to leave the shores of my beloved Ireland ; I never should wish to leave ——”

He paused, and seemed to hesitate ere he

finished the sentence. Lucinda blushed deeply, and resumed her pencil, with which she became busily occupied.

“ To leave you, Lucinda,” O’Sullivan found courage to say.

Lucinda worked away at her drawing with intense assiduity.

“ Oh, forgive my boldness,” continued Henry, “ have I offended you?”

“ Indeed you have not,” replied Lucinda, in soft, low accents, and still bending her eyes upon her drawing; but her hand trembled with intense emotion, and the pencil fell from it.

“ Oh, dearest Lucinda, how exquisitely sweet and precious are these fleeting moments—the last, perhaps, I may for years be permitted to enjoy—Oh ! let me tell you that I love you—love you to distraction—I have loved you, have borne your dear image in my heart ever since we met at Martagon—can I—can I venture to

hope, that these feelings are mutual—I know I am inexpressibly presumptuous—but yet, I had flattered myself ——”

• “Hush!” said Lucinda, “here is Prince Gruffenhausen.”

And as she spoke, his Serene Highness approached from a postern door, inhaling huge quantities of German snuff from an enormous gold box. His moustache was thickly powdered with the “titillating dust.”

“Baf! I know not for why beoples go to see such place as dese ruin—dey were goot enough in de daysh of de old monksh, ven der vas goot store of gold and silber plate, and moche great ponderous riches on dese altar, dat beoples could make sack and plunder of. But, mein himmel! I cannot understand how der is any pleasures, or enjoyments, or habbiness, in looking at old empty tumbling walls like dese—pofe!”

O’Sullivan said something of the interest

excited by the splendid works of other ages—the memorials of men who had long since crumbled into dust.

“Mein wort, Mr. O’Sullibans, dat is de most foolishhest reasons as I efer heard—and what goot are memorial of dose dusty old shentelmans? A life dog is better than a dead king—pofe!”

This conversation was an extremely unwelcome interruption of poor Henry’s tender ecstasies; but politeness required that he should make some remark in answer to Prince Gruffenhause, who, however, soon relieved him of his presence, by going in pursuit of Lady Ballyvallon and some friends who had joined her party.

“And now that his execrable highness is gone,” said Henry, “may I venture to express a hope—a prayer—Oh! pardon me, dearest Lucinda—that Lucinda may accept this hand? My heart is long since her’s, and her’s most devotedly.”

Lucinda unresistingly abandoned her beautiful hand to the caress of his, and murmured a timid, and yet not reluctant consent to their union, whenever Henry's circumstances should have improved so far, as probably to disarm any opposition on the part of Colonel Nugent to the match.

"Oh, my beloved Lucinda!" cried the successful lover, "you have made me the happiest of men—I will go instantly and speak to Nugent."

"Do not, Henry," said Lucinda, "for heaven's sake do not! allow matters to remain as they are for a while—grant your Lucinda this request—she has excellent reasons for it."

"May I ask what they are?"

"You may not inquire any further, dear Henry—at present; in the meanwhile I expect you will rely thus far upon my prudence. But Henry—dear Henry! surely you cannot be

serious in your notion of going to India? oh, do not, do not quit Ireland."

" Lucinda, I *must* leave Ireland for a while. I do not now stand in a position that could render me an eligible match for you, in the eyes of either your brother or of the world. Dearly and intensely as I love you, I do not press you to an immediate union, because I possess not at present the means to afford you those comforts which habit, to you, has rendered necessary. My estate is embarrassed, and the debts of my father ——"

" But why go to India?" interrupted Lucinda, " have you any prospect of obtaining an appointment there?"

" I have not got a positive promise. But a powerful friend, who is going to India, has pressed me to accompany him, and he tells me that *when there*, he is nearly certain of being able to procure me a lucrative appointment."

“ But in case you should fail,” said Lucinda, “ you will have incurred much expense in going and returning ?”

“ That expense my generous relation has engaged to defray ; and the appointment he believes he can procure for me, will enable me, should he succeed, to return in three or four years, and to claim my Lucinda. Oh ! with what intense anxiety I shall look forward to the happy, happy period of our meeting, never more to part !”

Lucinda permitted Henry to press his lips to her's, and the lovers had exchanged repeated vows of eternal, inviolable constancy, when Colonel Nugent and the rest of the Ballyvallin party approached from the adjoining cemetery, in order to inform Lucinda that they were now about to return to Knockanea. Lady Ballyvallin's manner to O'Sullivan was exceedingly affable and courteous, for which, perhaps, he was partly indebted to her ladyship's discovering

that he had long been the intimate friend of the Nugents. Before they separated, Colonel Nugent made him fix a day for his journey to Martagon, which was distant some thirty miles from Knockanea.

Mrs. Mersey reascended the cabriolet, on the express terms that Baron Leschen, and not the prince, should drive it; Colonel Nugent and Lucinda mounted their horses; Lady Ballyvallon, the lovely Jacintha, and Prince Gruffenhauseu entered the vrowtchsk, and the whole party returned to Knockanea.

O'Sullivan retraced his steps to his hospitable quarters at Father O'Connor's.

CHAPTER VI.

O, woman's smiles! O, woman's smiles!
Who can resist their witching wiles?

SONG.

LUCAS, the young lawyer, continued to persecute Miss Kavanagh with various indirect attentions, of which the object was sufficiently intelligible. Isabella did not mention this annoyance to her mother or her uncle, as old Lucas was an intimate and long-trying friend of Mr. Kavanagh's, and she did not wish to act in a manner which might tend to interrupt their friendship, as might have been the case had Kavanagh felt himself compelled to wound old Lucas's paternal pride, which was marvellously

sensitive where the incomparable Jonathan was in question. She had also hopes of inducing the aspiring swain to relinquish his designs upon her hand; and, finally, she looked forward to the approaching departure of Jonathan for Dublin, which was his usual residence, as a certain termination to the present disagreeable predicament.

But Miss Kavanagh did not prove altogether so inexorable to the elder Mordaunt; who, after making numerous prudential inquiries regarding her fortune and *her expectations* (the latter always form a considerable portion of a lady's possessions in Ireland), concluded that he could not do a wiser, or more prudent thing, than to make her an offer of his hand.

Isabella's heart pleaded strongly in her lover's favour; she referred him to her mother for an answer, and she begged that her mother might accept his suit.

Mrs. Kavanagh took an early opportunity of asking Mrs. Mersey certain questions respecting Mr. Mordaunt.

“ You met him in London, did you not ?”

“ Yes,” replied the widow, “ very frequently.”

“ Did he seem *recherché* ?” asked the anxious mother.

“ Yes—to make up whist parties,” answered Mrs. Mersey.

“ Hum—and was that his sole merit in society ?”

“ Oh, dear, no—he danced extremely well too.”

“ His connexions are good ?”

“ Very good—he is cousin to Lord C—and Lord D——.”

“ Have you any idea, Mrs. Mersey—that is, did you ever hear any one mention what his property may be ?”

• “ My dear madam, your inquiries are so

very minute, that I begin to fancy you must have a personal interest in making them."

" *Entre nous*, he has proposed for Isabella," said Mrs. Kavanagh.

" Indeed? I congratulate you most sincerely. But his property—may be anything, or nothing, for what I know. I certainly never saw any experienced mammas laying traps for him, which could have hardly been the case if he were at all worth looking after; but I heard—that is, I *think* I heard, some old uncle, or cousin, or aunt—indeed I am not certain, I paid so very little attention to the circumstance—but I think I heard some person say that Mordaunt had an estate in Yorkshire, or Wiltshire, or somewhere. Oh! I believe the man has certainly got something—he was always extremely fortunate at cards; *that* I know."

" Has he a house in London?"

" I believe not; when I met him he was quite domesticated at Lord C——'s."

“ Was he said to be a *roué* ?”

Mrs. Mersey laughed. “ How can I tell ?” said she : “ not more so, I suppose, than the rest of the world.”

“ Oh, but really,” said Mrs. Kavanagh, “ I am anxious upon this point, for I never will allow Isabella to marry any one whose moral conduct, at least, is not unexceptionable.”

“ My dear Mrs. Kavanagh, I quite coincide in your sentiments, and I should certainly write to London, to know if Mr. Mordaunt enjoyed the reputation of being a *roué* there, only that my friends might possibly accuse me of planning to convert him, by matrimony, and I would not incur that suspicion on any account. The world, you know,” said the prudent widow, in a moralizing tone, “ is so very censorious.”

“ But you never heard,” said Mrs. Kavanagh, “ that he *was* a *roué*.”

“ Not I. I never heard whether he was or not.”

“ Have you had any opportunity of knowing if his temper was good? Temper is a leading consideration where marriage is in question.”

“ Temper? let me see. I have certainly seen him bear a vast deal of petulance from Lord C—— at whist; Lord C—— is dreadfully ill-tempered at cards, whether winning or losing. Mordaunt stands it all in perfect silence, and never moves a muscle of his apathetic countenance.”

“ Perhaps Mordaunt’s temper was mere sullenness.”

“ Really,” replied the widow, “ I don’t pretend to analyze his motives—all I know is that he looked unmoved and philosophical, and contrived to lose the game for Lord C—— (whose partner he was), most probably in order to take his revenge for his lordship’s impertinence.”

“ I earnestly wish that I could ask some perfectly impartial person about his dis-

position," said Mrs. Kavanagh; "you must certainly know some of his intimate acquaintance in London, Mrs. Mersey; will you oblige me by writing a letter of inquiry to some of them; you can manage it so as to disarm suspicion of any particular design."

"Pardon me, but that is precisely the thing I could *not* manage—and as to an *impartial* person, pray who is impartial upon any subject?"

"But you'll write—won't you?"

"Oh, certainly, if you wish it," replied Mrs. Mersey, briskly. And down she sate to her escritoire, and quickly wrote a letter, requesting information from a female friend, concerning all possible particulars connected with Mordaunt; "you need not apprehend," said she to Mrs. Kavanagh, "that my friend's replies will flatter Mordaunt, for she easily will guess that these queries involve some matrimonial scheme, and being herself a dis-

appointed spinster, of old standing, she will not feel particularly anxious to expedite, for thers, that felicitous consummation which she has never been able to accomplish in her own case. See," continued the widow, showing Mrs. Kavanagh her letter, "I have conquered, for *your* sake, all my delicacy, and have put my inquiries under their several heads, with all the precision of a geologist classifying strata."

"Thank you, dear Mrs. Mersey—a thousand times thank you; I shall feel most wretchedly impatient, till your correspondent's answer comes."

The answer came at length, and was not by any means unfavourable; especially as the writer's *préjugés* were presumed to be inconsistent with a favourable statement.

"ESTATE—in Yorkshire, an ancient family possession—its value reputed 3000*l.* per annum—say *two* in reality. CHARACTER—she was wholly unable to say what it might be, as she

never had heard it either censured or praised. With respect to the word '*roué*' which Mrs. Mersey had used in her letter, she (the writer) begged that it never might again be addressed to her, as she understood that it implied a description of person that she could not exactly approve of, and wished to hear nothing about."

"She is perfectly right," said Mrs. Kavanagh.

"Pooh! all cant and hypocrisy," answered the widow. "Well—TEMPER—never heard that his temper was bad; in fact, on the contrary, she was inclined to estimate it very highly, from having seen Mr. Mordaunt's patience most cruelly tried one evening, by being compelled to sit out a sonata from Miss Ethelinda Fancourt, a cavatina from Miss Henrietta, a *capriccio giocoso* from Miss Frances (who chose to be called Fanchette), a bravura from Miss Medora, and a grand *quartetto*

maestoso from Ethelinda, Henrietta, Fanchette, and Medora in full chorus; all which inflictions Mr. Mordaunt endured with a temper that would have done honour to the primitive martyrs."

"How she hates those four women!" interjected the widow, "and all from the spirit of rivalry."

"Read on," said Mrs. Kavanagh.

"Oh, the rest only tells us what we all know already, that Mordaunt's descent is distinguished, and that his mother traced her pedigree from Rollo, Duke of Normandy."

Kavanagh followed up his sister's sagacious inquiries by writing to some persons of consideration in Yorkshire, to learn the reality of Mordaunt's possessions, and the answers he received were in every respect satisfactory.

Meanwhile the ardent lover rose higher every day in Isabella's estimation; his conversation,

if not brilliant, was at least eminently rational and pleasing; his person was strikingly handsome; and no one better could assume the tender tone, and point the insinuating glance, which woman's heart has a thousand times found so fatally delicious.

CHAPTER VII.

La vérité est, qu'étant ambitieuse, elle n'avoit voulu épouser qu'un homme de grande qualité.

PAUL ET VIRGINIE.

LADY JACINTHA engrossed so much of Baron Leschen's admiration by the inimitable style in which she warbled her German songs, of which she had an endless collection, that Mrs. Mersey found it absolutely indispensable to take some decided step, to arrest the formidable progress her ladyship was hourly making in the Baron's heart; a progress which was rapidly tending to a very unequivocal monopoly.

But what could Mrs. Mersey do? Of musical talent she had none, and the Baron was passionately fond of music. Here Lady Jacintha had a formidable advantage. Oh! it was killing,—absolutely killing to the widow, to see Leschen, rapt in admiration, gazing in ecstasy upon the lovely songstress, while his soul drank in the rich and languid melodies of his distant native land, or was whirled aloft to the third heaven on the wings of a brilliant, sparkling *allegretto*, which was trilled forth in tones of exquisite and fairy lightness by lips whose beauty distanced all the loveliness which poets have ascribed to the “parted cherries” of their heroines. “Something *must* be done,” thought Mrs. Mersey, “and quickly too—for matters have become very critical.—She engrosses so much of his time and attention—if *I* could engross as much in *any* other way, I might trust to my own *savoir faire* for the rest—her ladyship’s talents are all in the

musical line—mine are rather in the literary department—I have it—I have it!” exclaimed the fair widow, as a plan occurred to her inventive brain, of counterpoising Lady Jacintha’s formidable influence; “I will learn German from Leschen—yes! that will do—I have some slight knowledge of the language already, but I need not tell him so—he will be the more astonished at the ease and quickness with which I shall acquire it—Yes! I will be Leschen’s pupil; and oh! what innumerable opportunities will be thus afforded, of bringing into play the exhaustless artillery of love.”

Accordingly, Mrs. Mersey, with the Baron’s assistance, commenced a spirited attack upon the mysteries of German verbs and nouns, and the nearly impregnable difficulties of Teutonic idioms, in which she speedily acquired so great a proficiency, that Leschen from time to time exclaimed, “De marvellous creature! der wonderful genius! mein goot madame,

your intellect is—oh ! mein heafens ! all von grand astonishment—oh, yes indeed ! I do feel moche surprise at de most wonderful and ponderous brain you do haf, for to conceive tings wid quickness, and to retain dem wid certainty.”

Lady Jacintha was startled and chagrined at these encomiums, but her ladyship's fears were increased as the Baron's praises occasionally assumed a more tender and equivocal character, such as, “oh ! mein heafens, how rare do we see such woman ! Mein goot lady, it is de mighty and colossal pleasure, yes indeed ! to haf *you* for a pupil.” And then would follow some amatory or encomiastic verses from Schiller, or Goëthe, or Winderspohl, the tendency of which was not the less clearly intelligible to the jealous apprehension of Lady Jacintha, that she did not understand one syllable of the language in which they were uttered ; for the Baron's raptured gaze on his “marvellous

pupil," and his softened, conscious cadence, were all, all, too explanatory.

Mrs. Mersey soon discovered, in the progress of her literary intercourse with Leschen, that the Baron was a passionate admirer of all the legendary tales of Germany, with their mixture of historical interest, and the mystic machinery of demons and wizards.

" You haf some fine old castell here in Ireland. Now, I nefer hear you tell any wonderful, terrible legend about dem—legend dat would make,—yes indeed, mine most excellent pupil,—dat would make your fleshs creep, creep, creep, as if thousand mouse vas running ober your body. Not dat I beliefs dese ting—oh no! dat would be not philosophe—but we *do* beliefs dem for de vat you do calls *illusion*,—yes,—just as we do beliefs scene on de stage, or any oder fantasies."

Mrs. Mersey having ascertained the Baron's

legendary taste, next occupied her genius in devising the most *effective* mode in which it could be gratified. .

Ere long, an exploratory visit was proposed by Lady Jacintha to the ruined castle of Glen Minnis; in which, as our readers will remember, the Mordaunts, O'Connor, and O'Sullivan, had passed such a jovial night. Her ladyship's object in proposing this excursion, was avowedly to gratify the Baron's antiquarian predilections; and she said so many pretty and flattering things, and evinced such a sympathy of taste with Leschen, that the fears of any rival less accomplished than the dexterous widow, might well have been excited.

"Now she thinks that this visit to Glen Minnis will afford her a magnificent field-day,"—such were Mrs. Mersey's reflections,—“but I shall turn her artillery against herself. She

may rave about waterfalls, and oak copse, and mountains—but *I* ——”

The party set off in Prince Gruffenhausen's vrowtchsk, and consisted merely of the Lady Jacintha, Mrs. Mersey, the Baron, and the Fatalist. Notwithstanding his highness's affectation of indifference, his attention was always excited by the remnants of ancient fortifications; and he surveyed with considerable interest the mouldering fragments of bastions and outworks, of which the foundations were, in many parts, all that remained, around the lofty keep, or central tower of Glen Minnis.

“ Dis is fery fine ruins; fery fine indeet !” said Leschen.

“ And the scenery,” said Lady Jacintha, “ is bold and striking.”

“ Fery bold, and fery striking indeet. Ach ! but a castell like dis, or not half as better as dis, vould haf its own legend on de bank of de

Rhine. But in Ireland you haf marvellous lack of dese history. Now, I vould give goot golden coin to know all about dis place,—yes, indeed ! and who builded it, and who lived here, and what broke down dat great rent all down from de top to de bottom of dat tower.”

“ You shall know, my dear Baron,” said Mrs. Mersey, “ without its costing you one golden coin ; I have lately been collecting the history of this castle from several authentic sources ; and I have woven a portion of it into a tale, which I flatter myself will interest you a little ; and which I hope I shall have your assistance at a future period to translate into German.”

“ Mein excellent pupils !” cried Leschen, his eyes sparkling with delight, “ and when shall I haf de habbiness to see dis histories ?”

“ This instant, if you like,” replied the widow, producing her manuscript ; “ I brought it, as I thought its effect would be enhanced

by my reading it for you in the midst of the scene to which the story refers."

"Delightful!" exclaimed Lady Jacintha, who had acquired too much *tact*, from Mrs. Mersey's example, to allow her vexation to appear; "and who was the ancient proprietor of this castle?"

"It belonged to a singular character, the Lady Honoria O'Sullivan, who lived in the reign of Elizabeth; an ancestress of the handsome young O'Sullivan, who danced with Lucinda Nugent at your fancy ball."

The party took their seats on a stone bench, and Mrs. Mersey began to read for their amusement, her

Legend of Glen Minnis.

"It was beneath the glowing noontide sun of one of the hottest days in June, 1602, that the gallant, gay, and handsome Gerald Fitz-Walter, attended by a few of his retainers,

journeyed onwards to Cork, through a wide and healthy plain in Imokilly. Fitz-Walter was nearly related to Sir George Carew, the Lord President of Munster, in virtue of which connexion, he assumed considerable state, especially when travelling. Among his more favoured attendants were the two Fitz-Johns; of whom the elder, Gilbert, was directed by Sir George Carew to watch over his youthful relative, and supply his want of prudence by his own experience. The younger brother, John Fitz-John, resembled Gerald Fitz-Walter in the leading features of his character: the same ardent love of adventure, the same contempt of danger, the same extravagant impetuosity, distinguished both.

Gerald, oppressed by the heat, had thrown the bridle on his horse's neck, and loosened his attire to enjoy whatever breath of air might wave along the sultry plain; a look of heated languor pervaded his face; and his graceful form,

expert in all the warlike and courtly exercises of the age, seemed listless and enervated. The plain through which they travelled, afforded no shelter from the burning ray, and Fitz-Walter interrupted an erudite discourse on hawking, with which John Fitz-John was trying to amuse him, by pointing his attention to a distant part of the horizon, where a wood of ancient trees appeared.

“ ‘There is shade enough yonder, I wot,’ said Gerald, ‘if we only could reach it. Spur forward, John, and see if thou canst not find some place whereat we may refresh ourselves.’ Instantly John prepared to obey this mandate, when Gilbert approached, and in a low tone stated to Fitz-Walter, that as they were now in the territory of the hostile seneschals of Imokilly (the Fitz-Geralds), it were better not to divide their small party. ‘John,’ continued Gilbert, ‘hath a better hand than head, and if made prisoner, the varlet’s wagging tongue may

peradventure betray us, so as to risk the safety of us all.'

" ' Made prisoner ?' repeated Gerald haughtily, ' and who shall dare to make him prisoner ? Is May so long passed, that my Lord President's name is forgotten in these parts ? credit me, Gilbert, that if the kerne should dare to meddle with John, nay, if they but dare to wag a finger at him discourteously, the best head that ever sat upon the shoulders of a Geraldine shall answer it. What ? dost think the kerne have brazen bodies, to fight beneath this sweltering sun ? Would that *I* had had their sense to abide beneath the shade, and not to have taken horse till eventide.'

" ' Heaven forbid,' returned Gilbert, ' that you, or any of my lord's near kin, should journey on this ground in the eventide.'

" ' Gilbert, thou art fainthearted. Are not my Lord President's forces dispersed throughout this neighbourhood ?'

“ ‘ Yes; but that is no surety against ambush.’

“ ‘ Cast fear away from thee, Gilbert—thou art over-fanciful,’ said John Fitz-John.

“ ‘ Tush, foolish boy,’ replied his elder brother. ‘ I bethink me now, I have been a constant dweller in this vicinage since the year of grace 1580; and truly I opine I should therefore know its dangers somewhat better than thou canst.’

“ Fitzwalter gave John a private signal to disregard the prudent admonitions of his brother Gilbert; and he accordingly spurred forward his steed in the direction already pointed out, without awaiting any further reply from Gilbert.

“ The party still continued slowly to advance, Fitz-Walter being amused with the reproachful glances with which Gilbert occasionally ventured to regard him. In less than an hour John returned.

“ ‘ You have seen her ? ’ whispered Gerald mysteriously.

“ ‘ I have kissed her fairy feet—Oh, Sir, I never gazed on such transcendant beauty—if your wooing prospers, you will be supremely fortunate.’

“ Gilbert frowned upon the whisperers, whose colloquy, he doubted not, concerned some wild frolic which he could not approve of. He continued to preserve a sullen, moody silence, until they reached the wood, near the verge of which was a rude shealing, or hut, constructed of green branches, and thatched with heath. This wigwam appeared to have been recently deserted by some of the Irish, for bones, and the fragments of festivity lay scattered around. In a corner was piled a considerable quantity of hay, of which the provident Gilbert gladly availed himself for the horses of the party. As he watched the animals while feeding, he took occasion to entreat that Fitz-Walter would not

separate from him, and pleaded the danger which his experience had taught him to connect with these woody defiles. Fitz-Walter smiled, and the moment that Gilbert's attention was otherwise occupied, he quitted the hut unobserved ; and, attended by John Fitz-John, who acted as guide on the occasion, descended an adjoining dell, through a steep and narrow crevice in the overhanging rock, and after following the empty channel of a brook for nearly a quarter of a mile, reached a low, natural arch in the rock, to which John immediately directed his attention.

“ ‘ This is the entrance to her dwelling,’ said John.

“ ‘ John,’ said Fitz-Walter gravely, ‘ *shall* I enter? I do confess to thee, that I feel, for the first time in my life, some slight touch of fear. Thou knows’t that we have heard strange things about her.’

“ ‘ My brave master,’ answered John, ‘ I

would not for the best horse I e'er saw, that any person else should behold you in this mood. What ! after winning my Lord President's permission to come on Gilbert's expedition, which he was marvellous ill inclined to grant, and after giving the slip to my ever-watchful brother,—to turn back when you reached the lady's very door—Sir, every true gallant in the world would cry you shame for a craven hearted knight.'

" ' I verily believe thee, John. But yet—Is the dame so *very* beautiful as men say ?'

" ' When you see her, Sir, you will confess that she is nature's masterpiece. And she hath heard of *you*, and wearies till she sees you.'

" ' I must go in,' said Fitz-Walter, ' it is my fate.'

" They entered beneath the low browed arch, and soon found themselves in a natural chamber of considerable size, whose roof was supported by a ponderous stalactical pillar. The only

inmates who at first appeared, were a page in a Spanish dress, and a beautiful girl, both engaged in preparing refreshments. The girl uttered an exclamation of surprise, on beholding Fitz-John.

“ ‘ Surely, Petronilla, you are not surprised at our finding your haunt here ?’

“ ‘ No, Fitz-John ; but I marvel at your boldness in venturing hither.’

“ ‘ It were boldness truly, if we came unasked,’ replied John. ‘ Commend this noble gentleman, master Gerald Fitz-Walter, to your noble lady, and tell her that he craves permission to approach her nobleness.’

“ Petronilla accordingly retired through an entrance that resembled a rich Gothic archway.

“ The sound of a lute now mingled with the murmurs of a streamlet that flowed through the rock, and a voice of exquisite melody sang the following stanzas to a simple, plaintive air :

- ' Here, in this lonely cave,
Far from man's prying eye,
I list the bubbling wave
That wanders by.
- ' And oft I think its stream,
So like man's checquered state,
An emblem well may seem,
Of human fate.
- ' Now, it flows smoothly past,
In clear serenity,
Reflecting in its breast
Each rock and tree.
- ' Eftsoones it wheels, anon !
In angry whirls of foam,
And dashes madly on,
To reach its home.
- ' That home is Ocean wide,
Beneath whose briny wave
The little streamlet's tide
Shall find its grave.
- ' Thus fares weak man's brief power,
Upon Life's eddying stream,
Until the fated hour
Dissolves his dream,

' And launches forth his bark
Upon that mighty sea,
Cheerless, unknown, and dark,
Eternity !

' Then let us LOVE and LIVE,
While LIVE and LOVE we may,
Nought else a ray will give
To our brief day.'

" When the strain ceased, Petronilla returned, and courteously announced to Fitz-Walter that her mistress was ready to receive him. They entered a short passage, which led to a chamber somewhat circular in shape. In the centre of this apartment a stalactical column arose from the cool and sparkling water, which rushed, in a rapid stream of liquid crystal, through its channel in the floor of polished granite, and was afterwards lost amidst the mazy wildness of the dell. The branches of young oak and birch without, threw their waving shadows on the walls of the cave, as they quivered in the

slightest breath of air; the delicious freshness and repose of everything around, formed a delightful contrast with the fervid heat that Gerald had so recently endured on his journey through the sultry plains of Imokilly. Several bottles of rich Spanish wine stood cooling in the streamlet; no unpleasing prospect to our youthful traveller."

"Dat vas goot, fery goot," interrupted Prince Gruffenhausen, smacking his lips; "dat goot wine is de bettermost part of de story as I haf heard yet."

"On a couch that fronted the entrance," resumed Mrs. Mersey, "reclined the Lady Honoria O'Sullivan, who put aside her lute on the approach of Gerald and Fitz-John, and rose to receive them.

"Gerald was accustomed to the bright array of beauties who graced the court of Elizabeth, but even *their* charms were eclipsed by the radiant loveliness of the Lady Honoria. She

was evidently gratified at the silent homage of his admiration ; surprise, which partook of a feeling of awe, at her resplendent beauty, held him actually mute and motionless for a very few moments ; when, recovering himself, he thanked her, with natural courtesy, for her gracious condescension in permitting him to visit her.

“ Among the most beautiful of old Isaac Oliver’s exquisite miniatures, is that of the ‘ Dame of the Cave.’ In this she is represented as about eighteen, her fair complexion finely blended with carnation ; her eyes, of darkest hazel, shaded by their long, soft, silken lashes, and her whole contour and features delicately Grecian. Even while gazing on the silent portrait, the spectator is compelled to acknowledge that

——— ‘ Those lovely lips, though mute,
Tell an eloquent tale of love.’

“ Her luxuriant chesnut hair had escaped from its confinement in a golden net, and partially shaded her bosom.

“ ‘ Sit, noble Sir,’ said the Lady Honoria, with the air of a princess; ‘ sit, and partake of some refreshment; and *you*, Sir,’ she added, turning to Fitz-John, ‘ you have travelled far, and must needs feel weariness.’

“ ‘ My attendant, gracious lady,’ said Gerald Fitz-Walter, ‘ will partake of Petronilla’s hospitality; his quality besseems not your board.’

“ The Lady Honoria gracefully bent her head towards John, who immediately retired with Petronilla, grateful to his master for affording him, although somewhat at the expense of his dignity, so fair an occasion of furthering his suit with the maiden.

“ ‘ Methinks, lady,’ said Fitz-Walter, ‘ you lack not courage, thus to abide here in the vicinage of wild kerne, with so small means of

defence in case of an incursion. But in you, this is not overmuch boldness ; for those charms which exercise despotic sway over all hearts, would even tame the wildest savages.'

" ' Nay, fair Sir, the boldness is on *your* part, in venturing hither so nearly unattended. For myself, I bear about me a talisman where-withal I can ever charm down the rudeness of the wild kerne into fealty. But since the noble Fitz-Walter hath adventured thus much for a visit to the ' Lady of the Cave,' I were most ingrate, were I not to reward his bold venture as I best may.'

" She took her lute, and renewing the strain which the entrance of Fitz-Walter had suspended, his soul was quickly imparadised in visions of elysium, by the dulcet notes of more than mortal melody."

" But did he drink de goot Spanish wine?" asked Gruffenhausen.

" I must beg," said Mrs. Mersey, that your

Highness will have patience; he *did* partake of a most exquisite banquet, and drank largely of the wine that interests your curiosity so much.

“ The hours sped rapidly upon the wings of mirth, and love, and music; and ere evening closed, the lady gave Fitz-Walter a pressing invitation to visit her in the course of the ensuing week, at her castle of Kilcrow, which crowned the steep crag whose name it bore, and beetled over the Atlantic, apparently as solid and as durable as the rock on which it stood. Gerald accepted the attractive invitation with alacrity, and bade farewell to his mysterious hostess; and, followed by John Fitz-John, soon regained the verge of the wood, where Gilbert had awaited his return with anxious apprehension.

“ They proceeded to Cork, where they arrived on the following day. Fitz-Walter, impatient to visit the Lady Honoria, soon

found a pretext for advancing further west, attended by his faithful John; and they slackened not in their journey till they reached the ancient castle of Kilcrow. The castle could only be approached by water, for the pier that had formerly connected the highland which it occupied with the neighbouring mainland, was so broken and dilapidated as to be totally unavailable for the purposes of communication. By water, then, Fitz-Walter approached; and great was his astonishment, when, on announcing his name and quality to the porter, he received for answer, that the lady of the castle knew of no such person, and could not possibly admit unaccredited visitors. ‘Beshrew my heart,’ he exclaimed, ‘here must be some strange mistake. I am Master Gerald Fitz-Walter, my friend, nephew to the Lord President of Munster; you have not delivered my name aright unto your noble mistress; I am here to wait upon her, by her special invitation.’

“ Again was the name of the visitor transmitted to the Lady Honoria, and again did the lady refuse him admission to her halls, declaring that she had never even heard of such a person.

“ Fitz-Walter, stung with the insult, returned to his boat, when, on passing the angle of the castle, a billet was dexterously flung into his lap from a loop-hole in the wall. He opened it, and read as follows:—

“ ‘ Come to-night ; there be those here in whose presence I could not have dared to admit you. Moor your bark beneath the casement to the west of the round-tower. A slight serenade will tell me when to aid you from the boat ; I shall need this, *for I cannot watch at the casement.* And do you, fair Sir, fear nought ; for the sentinels will be deep in the carouse for two hours after midnight.’

“ Overjoyed at this flattering billet, Fitz-

Walter was punctual in keeping the appointment it contained. The rock on which the castle stood had been hollowed by the ceaseless workings of the ocean into a stupendous arch, beneath which the little bark of the adventurous Gerald was moored at midnight.

“ The dark form of the solitary pilot might soon be seen stealing up the rock, under the huge black walls of the fortress, which flung their sullen shadow on the water, on whose waves the moonlight elsewhere sported in ten thousand glorious sparks of rippling silver.

“ Fitz-Walter stood beneath the casement which the billet had described ; he saw that its lattice was open ; no taper burned within, and uncertain whether its fair inmate still watched his approach, or had consigned herself to slumber, he chaunted forth the following serenade, in tones of rich, expressive tenor :—

‘ Bright the moon shines o’er the wave,
As I guide my bark to thee;
Love! thy shadowy slumbers leave,
And look upon the quiet sea.

‘ Soft visions now, with potent spell,
Surround thy couch at midnight hour,
And music’s wild and fitful swell
Enchains thy soul with magic power.

‘ Oh! be thy dream of peace and bliss,
Of smiling eyes, and features bright,
Of bowers sweet, a lover’s kiss,—
Visions of harmony and light.

‘ Yet, wake from slumber, love! and see,
Beneath the moonlit summer skies,
Him who would dangers brave for thee,—
Awake thee, love! arise! arise!’

“ In reward for the lover’s serenade, a ladder of ropes was forthwith suspended from the casement; and a soft voice above, sweetly uttered the delightful words, ‘ Welcome, dearest Gerald.’

“ In the midst of his ecstasies, he could not avoid observing that the ladder of ropes ap-

peared as if it had seen service ; but stifling all emotions of suspicion, he ascended to the lady's apartment, which was fitted up in a style of luxurious magnificence that the rude and storm-worn exterior of the castle never could have led him to expect. The lady placed her finger on her lips, and taking Gerald's hand, conducted him to a gallery, which was closely curtained with the richest crimson damask. Gently raising a fold of the curtain, Gerald looked down upon a large and lofty hall, superbly lighted ; its floor was thronged with persons whose appearance bespoke wealth, and rank, and splendour : but Gerald soon observed that the revellers were principally foreigners ; and from their rich and grave attire, and proud and solemn bearing, he concluded that, at least, the greater number were Spaniards. They conversed with each other apart, in groupes of two or three, and with an air of energetic earnestness that seemed to intimate that the

subjects in debate were of the last importance. When Gerald had gazed upon the stately throng; he was led by the Lady Honoria to the chamber into which he had at first been admitted, and the lady put in requisition all her powers of unrivalled enchantment, to make the hours pass delightfully. She conversed, she sang, she extracted from the chords of her lute the most entrancing harmony; and when dawn arrived, and the household were sunk in slumber, Gerald was dismissed to his bark, and departed with his whole soul rapt in a wild and bewildering whirl of ecstasy, that scarcely left him consciousness sufficient to mind his footing on the well-worn and slippery ladder.

“ The following night Gerald repeated his visit to the Lady Honoria; but he never again returned from the castle, which was soon besieged and taken by a foreign foe. His fate is

involved in total darkness; whether he died in the defence of the fortress, or whether he escaped, his trusty follower, Fitz-John, was unable to discover.

“ The Lady Honoria was next heard of at her castle of Glen Minnis; and surprise, not unmixed with awe, was excited in the mind of Fitz-John, who had many opportunities of watching her motions, by her numerous, sudden, and secret transitions from the castle to the cave, and from the cave to the castle; especially as the distance exceeded forty miles, and rail-roads and steam-coaches were then, as now, alike unknown among Milesian hills and defiles.

“ ‘ Your lady is a strange and awful dame,’ Fitz-John once ventured to say to Petronilla; ‘ and I often have misdoubtings about my poor master.

“ ‘ He is not the first who hath gone

the same road,' answered Petronilla, impressively.

" ' Merciful heaven ! hath he then had foul practice ?'

" ' I enjoin thee everlasting silence on this matter,' answered Petronilla ; ' only this do I say, that I would not live another hour with my lady, only that a powerful spell constrains me, that thou wotst not of.'

" ' But my noble master, Gerald Fitz-Walter ? Out upon thee, wench ! I *will* speak.'

" ' For the love of heaven, do not, John, unless thou wouldst see me dead. Thou can'st not recall the noble gentleman's life, and thy tongue might cost me mine.'

" John Fitz-John was horror-stricken, but his love for Petronilla kept him silent.

" Years, long years, passed away. The Lady Honoria was absent from Glen Minnis, and many persons said that she had gone to

Spain. The old seneschal of the castle died; he was succeeded by his son, who died in his turn, and was again succeeded by another. Still, whoever died, no one heard of the Lady Honoria's death; although generations passed away, all the orders addressed to the members of the household were still transmitted in her name. Two monarchs were successively gathered to their fathers; another was cruelly murdered by a parricidal faction, and his race was expelled from Britain: the usurper, who succeeded him, also passed away, and joy filled the empire at the prospect of the restoration of the ancient dynasty. It was at this period,—nearly sixty years from the time of the Lady Honoria's departure from Ireland, that her ladyship's return to Glen Minnis was spoken of. At length a day was fixed, and the lady arrived at the castle, surrounded by a splendid train.

“ ‘ Now, so may heaven help me at my

need,' exclaimed the porter of the castle, in astonishment, 'but my lady must be either a saint or a devil. Trow ye not she is reputed ninety years of age, and here she comes, with a skin as fair, and a face as young—Blessed saints! she does not seem older than eighteen, and is of a most rare and surpassing comeliness, withal.'

" 'Hush, rash youth,' replied the wary old seneschal, to whom the remark was addressed, 'let not the stone walls hear thee touch upon that matter. *I* am an old man now, and have been an inmate of this castle since my childhood, and yet never saw I my lady. Ninety years?—ay, and ninety more on the back of that. Seal thy lips, Yamon—thy lady hath danced galliards and corrantoes in the court of King Henry the Seventh—but seal thy lips, I charge thee.'

" By those who claimed an acquaintance with that mystic art '*that none may name,*'

it was rumoured that the Lady Honoria O'Sullivan was an adept in its darkest practices; the story readily gained credence, supported, as it was, by her ladyship's protracted possession of her youthful charms, long, long after her contemporaries had fallen, one by one, beneath the reckless hand of death. However, as the *great world* was then as indifferent as in later ages, to infernal agency, Glen Minnis continued the resort of the titled and the gay.

“ One delicious day in spring, when the soft languor of the air, and the humming of unnumbered insects, produced a soporific effect upon the idle votary of pleasure, the lady of the castle retired to her latticed bower, where she was engaged in the matin amusements of the times, with a numerous party. This apartment was situated next a small tiring-room, in the eastern tower of the castle—it was lighted by a high and narrow casement.”—[Look, Baron Leschen, yonder is the very casement]: “ and

its gloomy appearance was increased by the black, yawning chimney, whose recess was reflected in a mirror that occupied a grim and massive frame of native oak, carved in such forms

‘As the fancy feigns, but fears to think on.’

The Lady Honoria was engaged in lively conversation with her guests, when a domestic entered, and informed his mistress that a stranger of remarkable appearance desired to speak with her. How he had entered the castle was unknown, for the porter had refused him admission at the gate, and he had departed, apparently without any intention of returning. Surprise soon pervaded the festive company, when the lady of the castle, rising from her seat, desired the domestic, in a tone of imperious command, to inform the mysterious visitant that she could not, for some hours, have leisure to admit him to an audience.

“ The servant retired, but re-appeared in an instant, with a message from the stranger, to the effect that if the Lady Honoria did not instantly comply with his request, he must seek her in the midst of her associates, as his business was too urgent to brook delay.

“ ‘ Noble lady,’ said Sir Geoffrey Pelham, a distinguished English knight, ‘ this stranger’s message is too insolent. Is it your ladyship’s pleasure that I go out, and take order that he be scourged from the castle ?’

“ ‘ No, brave Sir,’ returned the lady; ‘ since he insists on an immediate audience, I will grant it, and get rid of him as soon as I may.’

“ And the Lady Honoria quitted the apartment, leaving her guests in a state of suspense which the darkening atmosphere around increased to lively awe; sulphureous clouds obscured the face of day; the floodgates of heaven seemed opened; a lambent flame was

emitted from the dusky mirror, and played upon its surface; peals of thunder shook the castle to its lowest donjon vaults; the wall of the tower was rent from its summit to its base by the bright electric bolt; and the noxious exhalations, which floated through the gloom, increased the horror of the scene.

“An hour thus elapsed; and the terrified party, who awaited the return of their hostess with anxious eagerness, desired an attendant to seek out the Lady Honoria. The darkness began to disperse, and the more courageous guests accompanied the domestic to the apartment where the lady of the castle had received the mysterious stranger.

“There a corpse was found. It was that of an aged, withered female, attired in the gay and youthful garb which the Lady Honoria had worn, when she left her guests not an hour before. On her wrinkled, skinny finger, glowed a sparkling gem, which had, that very morning,

elicited the admiration of many of the thoughtless groupe; it was a ring, bestowed by Sir Geoffry Pelham, to propitiate her smiles. What were the feelings of the knight, as he gazed upon the form he had sought so recently to possess! Not a trace remained of the transcendant beauty that had graced the castle halls that morning.

“The domestic who first announced the arrival of the stranger, had ventured to look through a crevice in the door of the apartment to which the Lady Honoria had retired to receive him. His swarthy visage expanded to a fearful size, and assumed a demoniac expression, as he held to the lady an hour-glass. Her cheek blanched with terror, and some words were exchanged in a language of which the domestic was ignorant; but he could give no account of what subsequently passed, as the darkening horrors of the scene deprived him of consciousness.

“The vapours which ‘gramarye’ had conjured,

disappeared. The sultry air of May was refreshed by the commotion of the elements; the broad, bright sun shone out in golden splendour; and smiling nature wore her freshest garb, unconscious of the mighty elemental war through which a fallen spirit had departed to the horrors of a dark and drear eternity.

“The heir of the Lady Honoria deserted the Castle of Glen Minnis, which was suffered to crumble to decay. His descendants ultimately settled in a distant part of the kingdom.”

“Pofe!” exclaimed Prince Gruffenhausen, when Mrs. Mersey had finished the perusal of her tale, “dat is goot story enough, only dat I tink it is a little too long.”

“Too long!” repeated Leschen, “oh, how can your highness say dat? Mein heafens! what genius! what great, big, huge talents!” and finding his knowledge of English altogether inadequate to furnish phrases expressive of his enthusiastic admiration, the Baron had recourse

to his native German. "Ach! welche eine übersteigende naturgabe! welche eine bezaubernde weib! O! welches reizende talentvolles frauenzimmer!"

"Really," said Lady Jacintha, with a smile of the most generous approval, "your story is delightful. Will you, dear Mrs. Mersey, give me a copy of it, as a very particular favour? I am exceedingly anxious to have it in my album?"

Mrs. Mersey graciously acquiesced; and Prince Gruffenhausen resumed his critique on her legend. "I do not moche like dat notion of de old, bad, wicked womans, living one hundred and eighty year, and looking as beautiful and fresh as a yungfrau. Den dese devil, and wizard,—dese hexenmeister,—I don't nefer beliefs dat der is no such ting at all; no, indeed."

Leschen remarked, aside, to Mrs. Mersey, that his Serene Highness was one of the most superstitious mortals in existence, and that his

mind was thoroughly imbued with all the mysterious doctrines of the Rosicrucians; and that his belief in the prognostics of dreams was so full and undoubting, that he kept a dream-book, in which he regularly minuted, each morning, the shadowy omens of the night, with the view of comparing their mysterious "signs and portents" with their actual accomplishment.

Meanwhile, the party diverged from the castle, in order to examine the adjoining buildings; and the Prince's military predilections led him to those remnants of the edifice which wore the appearance of having once been fortified.

CHAPTER VIII.

Such were the thoughts that swelled his breast,
And each high feeling was expressed.

BROWNE.

THE day on which our antiquarian party visited the ruins of Glen Minnis Castle, was the same that had been fixed for O'Sullivan Lyra's departure for Martagon. The Nugents had returned there from Knockanea some days previously.

"I will ride part of the way with you," said Father O'Connor; "we will not probably meet again for a long time, and I like to enjoy as much as I can of your conversation."

As they were going to mount their horses, an

old man appeared, leading up an elderly woman ; and approaching O'Connor, he imploringly said,

“ Won't your reverence just try your hand at the cure ? ”

“ Impossible,” replied O'Connor ; “ I have fifty times told you I can work no cure.”

“ What cure ? Who is to be cured ? ” asked O'Sullivan.

“ This ould woman, plase your honour,” said the mendicant. “ Ah now, your handsome honour,” (coaxingly,) “ do just put in a word for poor ould Molly with his reverence.”

“ A word for poor old Molly ? ” repeated O'Sullivan, while O'Connor stood looking on and laughing ; “ Why, what is to be done ? ”

“ Just coax his reverence to work a *maracle* on Molly, to restore her to her speech ; she has been stone-dumb, poor crature, for fifteen years come May-day next.”

“ Why, how can *I* work miracles, you silly

old fellow?" said O'Connor; "how often must I tell you I have no such power?"

"Barney O'Guggerty would not believe the world but your honour's reverence could do it if you liked"

"A mad beggarman," said the priest, turning to O'Sullivan, "has persuaded this man that I am possessed of miraculous powers; and ever since he has taken this idea into his head, he has incessantly been tormenting me to restore speech to his wife."

"Ah, your raverence, just thry your hand at the maracle; *do*, your honour's raverence, as far as you can."

"Why, how do you know but if I worked the miracle of curing Molly, you old fool, and set her tongue once going, you'd give your eyes to get me to work the counter miracle of making her dumb again? When your wife is quiet, my good friend, I would advise you, by all means, to keep her so."

"Ogh no, your honour's reverence; just set her talking once, and I'll be the happy man."

"Very well," said O'Connor, with a lurking smile of humour, "I'll do my best."

Accordingly the priest re-entered the kitchen, and turned every person out of it excepting old Molly, and O'Sullivan, who felt curious to witness the success of the miraculous experiment.

"Now I need not tell you," said O'Connor, "that I know I'll fail; but it will free me, I trust, for the future, from this disagreeable importunity."

There was a poker heating in the fire, and when it was red hot, O'Connor seized it, and making a feint to run at Molly, who was sitting on a straw boss by the fire,

"Talk now, you old goose!" he exclaimed, "or I'll run this red hot poker down your throat!"

"Oh, ogh, ough—heaven preserve us!" roared out Molly.

“By all that’s comical, you’ve worked the cure!” exclaimed O’Sullivan, in utter astonishment.

“By all that’s comical, I have!” exclaimed the priest.

Such was the fact. The influence of the strong and sudden shock of fear upon the nervous system had actually loosened the organs of articulation, which had for so long a period been bound up; and Molly was eloquent in her professions of gratitude. “Now that’s very well so far,” observed O’Connor; “but the worst of it is, that my sanative abilities will henceforth acquire such celebrity, that every old woman with a tooth-ache will insist on my putting them in requisition; and red hot poker, you know, are not medicine for *every* case*.

They now mounted their horses, and, at-

* This circumstance is fact; I had it from the lips of the worthy and facetious old priest who officiated as THAUMATURGOS on the occasion.

tended by the everlasting Bonaparte Howlagan, who followed them on foot, keeping up with the pace of the steeds in a long-breathed swinging trot, they pursued their pace through the hills for some miles, until the noble bay of Dunmanus at length broke upon their sight; a magnificent sheet of water, nearly fifteen miles in length from its inland extremity to the harbour's mouth. The hills that bordered its shores were bolder, higher, and far more abrupt than any of those through which they had hitherto travelled.

O'Connor slackened his horse's pace, to converse with a parishioner who wanted to speak with him apart, and while he was thus occupied O'Sullivan entered into conversation with Bonaparte.

"You are always in attendance on the priest, I think?"

"Not always, Sir, but I am very often, and

I wish I was oftener ; it would have kept me out of a power of mischief, any way."

" How so ?"

" Bekase, your honour, I had always,—may heaven forgive me !—a sad trick of fighting at fairs, and his raverence has preached himself hoarse to me about it ; and I like to keep near him, for somehow, when I do, I don't feel so wickedly inclined."

" But what on earth tempts you to engage at anytime in so barbarous and unchristian a practice ?"

" I don't know on earth, Sir ; it's bekase it's my timplation, I suppose ; just as one man likes drinking, and another likes cockfighting. It's wicked, and devilish, I know, but for the life of me I could not keep quiet if I saw a nate bothering bit of a fight going on, and had a grip of *Baus gaun Soggarth*—I couldn't but *wheel*" (i.e. flourish my stick) " among the best of them."

“ Then I hope that you abstain from fairs, and factions, since a skirmish has such powerful temptations for you ? ”

“ Troth then I do ; I keep out of the way, and that’s the only thing that saves me.”

“ You do right, since nature has given you such a bad and savage heart, to abstain from scenes that would excite its evil dispositions.”

“ Troth, Sir, you just named it right ; it is a bad and savage heart ; but it once was worse than it is, by odds ; and all I’ve for it is to pray to God to mend it.”

O’Sullivan mused on the strange variety of human character that this peasant presented to his observation ; a temper naturally wild and ferocious, which its owner was trying to subdue by Christian discipline. A strong warfare still subsisted between the originally evil propensity, and the influence of awakened conscience ; and, as often occurs in such contests, the dominant vice would occasionally overcome the restraints

by which it had not yet been sufficiently schooled to obedience.

“ Poor Boney,” said the priest to O’Sullivan, “ it is a great pity that his character should be stained with such a terrible propensity ; the savage creature has his virtues too. He is honest and honourable, strictly observant of all his engagements and promises ; and, excepting his pugnacious dispositions, has in general been a moral and well conducted man. But that blot, I trust in God, will be henceforth removed from his character.”

O’Sullivan’s attention was arrested by the wild scenery, which at every step was presented in a different point of view, from the picturesque inequalities of the country. Cultivated spots appeared here and there interspersed through the broken, hilly waste. The parish church of Durrus, and the neat and compact glebe house of the Protestant rector, occupied a rising ground overhanging the upper end of the bay,

where the water narrowed to a point. The thatched, whitewashed cottage of the parish priest of Durrus, embosomed in its snug and thriving orchard, stood further inland among verdant meadows. At the distance of some miles along the bay, were visible the ancient castles of Dunbeacon and Dunmanus almost verging on the water's edge.

“ Those castles,” said O'Connor, “ were formerly inhabited by hardy buccaneers, who retired to enjoy the profits of their dangerous and stormy occupation on these desolate shores. As one gazes on their roofless walls, the mind irresistibly reverts to the wild wassail, the rude licence, of which those abodes have been formerly the scene ; and one painfully contrasts the riotous festivity of other days with the death-like stillness that now prevails in the long deserted edifices.”

“ What building is that ? ” asked O'Sullivan,

“ whose tall, old shafted chimneys rise out of yonder grove of lofty trees ? ”

“ That is Four-Mile Water,” answered O’Connor ; “ and, antiquarian as I am, I know little of it save what Smith tells us in his History of Cork ; namely, that it was once a place of some strength, and was built by a branch of the M’Carthy’s. The M’Carthy’s lost that, with other possessions, in the great civil war ; and their descendants struggled on, for no inconsiderable part of a century, in that doubtful class entitled ‘ decayed gentry.’ I well recollect the last of them who lingered in this neighbourhood. He was an old, patriarchal-looking man, with snow white hair. He inhabited a cottage near Dunbeacon. He was as finely formed and athletic a fellow as I ever saw. The peasants around regarded him with no small feelings of affection and respect, to which his excellent qualities appeared to entitle him well. He died at the age of ninety,

in the year—let me see—1795, I think ; and he possessed to the very last, the buoyancy of spirits and the warmth of affection which more properly belong to youth. Poor fellow ! he sometimes indulged in a sigh at the fallen fortunes of his house, but it was not a sigh of bitterness. When he died, there was less of the customary tumult of *wakes*, and more of deep and genuine feeling exhibited among the people, than, at that time, was usual on such occasions. His virtues and benevolence had made an impression on all.”

“ Pray,” said O’Sullivan, “ was not he the interesting old man on whose death you *confessed* to me, yesterday, that you once made verses ? ”

“ He was,” said Father John, looking downwards with the becoming diffidence of authorship.

“ Will you do me the favour to repeat them ? Fitzroy is not here, to take them down in short hand for his book, and *I* shall not laugh at

detecting that your hatred of poetry was merely simulated."

" Oh," said O'Connor quickly, " I never protested against *short* scraps of poetry ; it was your merciless bookfulls of clink, clank, clink, clank, that aroused my enmity."

" But you must not escape from repeating your verses on M'Carthy," said O'Sullivan.

The priest immediately commenced the recitation in a tone of unaffected feeling.

" I saw an old man laid within his shroud ;
A placid smile sat on his lifeless face,
Which told the faith that cheered his dying hour,
And lingered still, like some lone golden beam,
Cast on the silent heaven at eventide.

" His few thin hairs were snow-white, and his brow
Still showed the wrinkles of life's carking cares,—
Cares that were ended and forgotten now !
While children, and their children flocked around
Their parent's bier, and sobs unbidden told
How well belov'd the soul that hence had fled.
The open heart, the bounteous hand, were all
Remembered in that sad and solemn hour.

" Yet why lament ? why weep ? His hour has come ;
The Christian has been gathered to his God.
We weep not when the summer flowers fade—
We weep not when the leaves of autumn fall,
And strew with russet brown the forest glade—
We weep not when the full-eared corn bends down
Its golden load beneath the reaper's sickle ;
For the sweet flowers will blow again in spring ;
In spring the trees will ope their soft green buds ;
In spring the corn will push its tender shoots.

" Old man ! hast *thou* no spring ? O yes, thou hast !
Thy spring is heaven, bright, glorious, and unfading.
Hence thou hast gone, from hearts that loved thee well ;
Hence thou hast gone, from those, whose infant hours
Thou watchedst with a parent's tender care.

" We weep, for sorrowing nature claims a tear ;
But, 'mid our tears a glow of hope ariseth,
And we pour forth our souls in humble prayer,
That heaven's good and bounteous King may deign,
For JESUS' sake to bind anew those ties,
In happier worlds, that death has broken here.

" Old man, farewell. Earth closes o'er thy form,
To God we tremblingly commend thy spirit.
O ! may we meet thee, when Eternity
Unveils its awful wonders to our view."

Involuntary tears rose in the eyes of Father John, as the lines he repeated recalled to his memory the ancient friend of his early days. O'Sullivan tried, with very little tact indeed, to change the subject.

"No," said Father John, "let us speak of poor M'Carthy. I earnestly hope," he added, looking upwards, "to meet him where we never will be separated. It is good for us, my young friend, to speak upon these subjects; by keeping before us the evanescence of life, they teach us so to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

"Indeed it is good for us," said O'Sullivan, solemnly.

"I received my poor old friend's last breath," resumed O'Connor. "Oh, it is a deeply, unspeakably awful hour, when the human soul, dismissed from her perishable house of clay, appears in trembling nakedness before her God,

to answer for all the deeds done in the body,—
for every thought, every word, every action,
from the first hour of dawning reason up to
the moment of her exit from this world. Every
sin, every frailty, minutely recorded in God's
book! What a scrutiny! And, O! what inex-
pressible insanity in the children of the world,
to live as if no such scrutiny awaited them!"

CHAPTER IX.

Is he, quoth I, a safe companion? Ay, answered Peter, safe no doubt, if the Devil is safe.

STEPHEN RACKET'S ADVENTURES.

"WHY, then plase your raverence," said Bonaparte Howlaghan, "I'll tell you a chap that lives much as if there was no judgment before him at all at all."

"Whom do you mean, Boney?"

"Mr. Fitzroy Mordaunt; a boy that can play the quare capers."

"Is it that foolish fellow? I think you must mistake; he seems to be a harmless, though somewhat impertinent coxcomb, who devotes

his chief attention to his drawings, and this book he means to write."

"Troth, your raverence would be of another opinion, if you heard of some of his pranks."

"Upon my word I must inquire into this. A guest in the parish-priest's house, playing pranks in the parish, is not quite the most creditable thing in the world."

"I should not wonder if Boney were right," observed O'Sullivan, "for, from two or three expressions which escaped Fitzroy, I should not be inclined to deem him a very strict moralist."

"Indeed?" said O'Connor, turning short round to O'Sullivan; "you should have told me this before."

"Why, I thought that he scarcely would exhibit any of his frolics while his short stay at your house lasted; but, judging from what he says of himself, the man is a confirmed libertine."

"Oho! then he shall soon get the turn-out."

There is not a character," continued O'Connor, writhing his features into an expression of superlative contempt, "there is not a character so inexpressibly despicable as the libertine, the absurd scoundrel, who, while boasting of his liberty, is the *bond-slave* of his passions instead of their *master*. There is not a puppy in existence, whose practical blunders are more outrageously egregious than his; the fellow seeks enjoyment by effecting the destruction of his health, and happiness by pursuing the broad road that leads down to hell. A pretty fellow, truly!"

"A thoroughbred donkey," said O'Sullivan.

"My dear young friend," resumed O'Connor, in a tone of affectionate counsel, "you have had the inestimable advantage of a moral and religious education, which has hitherto been the means, under God, of preserving you from many of the nets in which the devil ensnares his miserable victims. May God of his infinite

mercy continue to preserve you, my young friend ! You are going, you tell me, to foreign countries ; and in your passage through the world you will meet with numberless emissaries of Satan, in the shape of dissipated youths, who, being entangled in the toils themselves, endeavour to involve in vice all those who are as yet unsullied. Laughter is invariably their engine ; they will try to drive you out of what is right by ridicule. But remember that the wretch does not deserve the name of *man*, who can be driven by an idiot laugh from the service of his God ; who can basely surrender the convictions of his reason and his conscience to the husky cachinnation of some profligate coxcomb's half-decayed lungs. Remember, too, my man, that in the long run *you* will have the laugh at your own side—while *they*—Oh ! God help them ! one shudders to think of their fate ! Poor, wretched slaves of Satan, their laughter will be turned into wailing and gnashing of

teeth, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched;—unless the grace of contrition and amendment be vouchsafed them, which may God of his infinite mercy grant.”

Their roads now separated: O’Sullivan thanked the priest from the bottom of his heart for his counsel, and promised, with God’s help, to follow it to the best of his ability.

“ Farewell, my dear young man,” said Father John ; “ keep God for your guide in all possible predicaments of life ; be faithful to THAT MASTER ; ‘ Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth, when the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh in which thou shalt have no pleasure.’ Farewell, dear O’Sullivan ; farewell.”

They shook hands with affectionate cordiality ; O’Sullivan, attended by his servant, pursued the road to Martagon, and O’Connor proceeded to visit a gentleman in the neighbourhood, in order to transact some business.

Bonaparte Howlaghan, left alone, returned homewards; and in order to make amends for the time he had lost in escorting the equestrians, the athletic fellow scampered like a deer over hills and dales, bounding lightly across drains, ditches, brooks, and all the impediments that lay in his way. Onward he speeded, his rapid career unchecked by any obstacle; and in less than an hour he had reached the old castle of Glen Minnis, which, as the reader will doubtless remember, Lady Jacintha and her party were exploring. It was just as her ladyship and Baron Leschen were expressing their delight at Mrs. Mersey's legend, that Prince Gruffenhausen descended to the outworks of the castle in order to try if he could discover the remains of the fortifications. His Serene Highness was picking his steps through a marshy patch of ground that immediately adjoined an outer town, the angle of which abutted on

the very path, on which our friend Howlaghan was careering with such headlong speed.

Neither party saw the other, being hidden by the intervening angle of the tower, until both came in sudden and violent contact. The concussion upset his Highness as well as Boney, and they rolled down the steep rocky ledge, upon a carpet of the softest, greenest moss, that lay at its foot. Howlaghan got up, laughing at the incident, and extended his hand to assist the fallen Fatalist to rise. But Gruffenhausen was too highly incensed at his tumble, to accept the proffered aid; he rose from the ground, cursing Howlaghan in German and English, and struck him a violent blow on the breast.

“What the devil sort of usage is this?” exclaimed Boney, his ire greatly roused; and clutching his alpeen in his left hand, he planted with his right a blow upon the prince’s ribs,

that sent the Serene Man staggering over to the rocky bank. "How dare you strike me?" roared Boney, "and I only offering civility?"

"Mein goot friend," said the Prince, whose taste for hostilities was very much diminished by the energetic emphasis of Boney's blow, "it vas because I could not help it; I does assures you dat it vas my destiny to strike you, mein goot peasant; we are not de masters of our actions always—not at all! it vas my most unlucky destiny; oh, yes indeed!"

"By dad, then," retorted Boney, "it is *my* destiny to beat your bones as soft as pap, my man;" and he squared his huge arms at the terrified prince in an attitude of awful defiance.

"Hold, hold—mein excellent friend," said Gruffenhausen in a deprecatory tone, "not so fery fast—Hold! hold! I vil convince you, mein goot peasant, dat it is not your destiny to beat my bones as soft as de vat you call pap;

not at all—you do not know who I am ; I am de Prince Ernest-Adolphus-Frederick Gruffenhause, of the House of Krunk-Doukerstein."

" And *I* am Jerry Howlaghan of the house, or the cabin, of Gurthnahuckthee, son to ould Murtough, and namesake to all the Howlaghans ; a breed that never took a blow from king nor cat without paying back two in the place of it."

" Tausand tenfels !" exclaimed Gruffenhause, his anger at Howlaghan's undaunted freedom mastering his fear ; " you do not know how to speak to von shentelmans ; you are like a wild savages—mein heiligkeit !"

" If *I* am like a wild savage," retorted Howlaghan, " 'pon my conscience *you're* like a wild beast, with that tundhering muff of hair upon your face—Troth it's just like the big dirty bear the showman had. I'll tache you, Mr. Dolphus M'Gruffus, how to aggravate civilized

people with your impudence." And Boney began to *wheel* Baus gaun Soggarth alarmingly.

"Mein most excellent friend," said the fatalist, whose indignant ire was again tamed down by fear, "I told you dat I vould convince you dat it vas not your destiny—oh, no indeed! to strike me or to beat me. Look at *dat*, mein friend! look at *dat*, mein excellent peasant," producing a guinea; "dere is a goot golden coin for you to put into your pocket, and to go quiet away, widout not to beat me not at all."

"Keep it, you poor ould spladhereen," said Boney, making a strong effort to control his passion, and marching off in transcendent disdain. "On second thoughts I won't strike you, and second thoughts, they say, are best. You've got off dog cheap, this turn; but pray take care how you lay violent hands

on a Howlaghan of Gurthnahuckthee in a hurry again."

"Mein peasant, I trust dat it vil not be mein destiny to do so," replied Prince Gruffenhausen, "but upon mine honest and true wort, I does assures you dat I could not help it."

But Boney was now out of hearing, and the fatalist was glad to get rid of him. "Pofe!" he exclaimed, "dat man is von big blackguard; von fery grand blackguard indeet! but I am glad dat he did not take de guinea at all event—pofe!"

While Boney continues his rapid homeward course, we must relate the events which had been taking place for the last half-hour, in his cabin.

Mr. Fitzroy Mordaunt had walked out, book in hand, after breakfast, and strolled leisurely along the banks of the river that flowed through Glen Minnis, until he reached the cottage of

Gurthnahuckthee, the paternal abode of the Howlaghans. The external appearance, and interior neatness, of this mansion, had recently been very much improved beneath the auspices of Nancy Howlaghan, Boney's favorite sister, who had lately returned to reside at Gurthnahuckthee, from a visit to an uncle in a distant county. During her absence from home, which had been of considerable length, Nancy had acquired many new ideas, and among her acquisitions was an ardent taste for neatness and comfort, which had hitherto been scarce commodities at Gurthnahuckthee. Within one short month, this active, bustling girl had achieved a valuable revolution in the domestic economy of her brother's house. She made him mend the broken thatch, and get the chimney cured of smoking; she effected the cleansing and white-washing of the dingy, sooty walls; she had got the furniture repaired and painted; and she had procured the erection of a

separate abode for the pigs, who did not now, as formerly, partake unreprieved, the hospitality of the cottage kitchen. Boney grumbled a little at these numerous and sweeping innovations; but Nancy was so gentle, so obliging, so sweet-tempered, and affectionate, that he could not resist her entreaties, especially as her whole heart seemed set on her success. To wash the chairs, tables, and dresser, and to sweep up the floor, was every morning a task which Nancy performed with zeal and alacrity, before she set about the duties of her own simple toilette. The day was then devoted to some one or other of the various branches of domestic industry.

Fitzroy had seen her once or twice, and her appearance attracted his notice. He now entered her cottage, where he found her alone, sitting quietly knitting by the fire.

“ Good morrow, Nancy,” said the learned tourist.

“ Good morrow, Sir, and thank you kindly,” replied the maiden.

“ You are always busy, I believe,” pursued the observant visitor, bending his glance upon her knitting.

“ No good is ever got by idleness,” quoth Nancy.

“ She is devilish handsome,” ruminated the young gentleman. “ Pray, my girl, where’s your mother ?”

“ Dead, Sir, these two years, Lord be good to her.”

“ Poor woman ! Is your father dead too ?”

“ No, Sir ; he’s gone to the fair of Barna-Gowlauns, to sell pigs.”

“ At what time will he be home ?” demanded Fitzroy.

“ He doesn’t live here, Sir ; he has given this farm to my brother Jerry ; he lives at the other farm, near the sea.”

" Jerry ? that 's the stout young fellow they call Bonaparte ? "

" The same, Sir. I wish," thought Nancy, " that the man would go away. "

" And where 's Jerry to-day ? " demanded the inquisitive catechist.

" Gone to Father O'Connor's. "

Fitzroy cast a keen and scrutinizing glance about the cottage ; and, under the pretext of admiring the painting of the dresser, he peeped into the inner apartment, the door of which adjoined the dresser, and ascertained that no person was there. He then walked out into the bawn, or farm-yard, which was equally deserted, all the inmates of the cottage having, in fact, gone to the fair, with the single exception of Nancy.

Having satisfied himself that Nancy was thoroughly unprotected, he returned to the cottage, and placing his chair by the girl,

proceeded to pay her certain personal compliments, in a tone so little relished by the party to whom they were addressed, that Nancy rose from her seat, moved over to the opposite side of the fire-place, and entreated that her complimentary visitor would favour her by quitting the cottage.

But the gallant youth was not quite so easily got rid off. He also rose, and made an effort to encircle Nancy's waist in his arms, when Nancy suddenly whisking from the fire a pot of boiling water, held it as a shield of defence before her person, loudly declaring that if he dared to lay a finger on her, the scalding contents of the pot should be instantly discharged at him. She had managed this defensive operation with such quickness and dexterity that Fitzroy was completely at fault, and he stood in an attitude of ridiculous perplexity, alternately gazing at the maiden's glowing face, and at the bubbling pot that intervened between them.

“Wait where you are a very little longer,” said Nancy, “and my brother Jerry will be home with *Baus gaun Soggarth*, and if he sees you here, he’ll lay open your rascally scull with one *plaesk* of his stick, as you’ll well deserve.”

But our amorous youth felt incensed at being thus easily counterworked by the girl, and disregarding her threat of Boney’s return, which he probably considered as being merely held out *in terrorem*, he caught up one of the chairs by the back, and engineered with its legs so efficiently as to render it a matter of necessity on Nancy’s part to drop the pot in self-defence, in order to prevent the scalding water from being splashed about her feet.

The instant she had laid down the pot, the terrified girl ran screaming to the door, pursued by Fitzroy; when, O sight of joy! Bonaparte appeared, with his usual accompaniment of *Baus gaun Soggarth* in his hand, springing

over the stile of the bawn ditch, and another instant brought him to the succour of Nancy.

“ Oh, Jerry, Jerry ! I thought I never would see you ! Thank God you ’re come ! ” cried Nancy, throwing herself into her brother’s arms.

“ Why—how now—what the devil is this ? ” shouted Boney, frowning awfully on the unlucky intruder, and disengaging himself from his sister, in order to be able to “ *wheel*,” unimpeded, at Fitzroy.

That nimble personage had immediately comprehended that the case was not one that admitted of very much deliberation, and on the first startling vision of Boney, he took to his heels with all the speed that terror could furnish, and cleared the bawn ditch at the nearest point, with an agility such as he had rarely exhibited before. Bonaparte, justly incensed at his brutal aggression upon Nancy, and feeling his own temper, too, not very much soothed by his recent *démêlé*

with Prince Gruffenhausen, was resolved that the amorous fugitive should not escape quite so easily ; and pursuing him with swift and giant strides, he overtook him at the bank of the river, and laying on a blow of Baus gaun Soggarth with equal force and science, he dislocated Fitzroy's right arm at the elbow.

“ There's for you now, my merry lad,” said Boney, “ that will spoil your embracing for a while, I think.” He then flung away his stick, as if afraid that he might be tempted to sanguinary extremities, and suddenly resolved upon another mode of punishing the culprit. Catching Fitzroy by the nape of his neck, he dragged him to the verge of the water, and standing on a large projecting stone, which afforded great facilities for his purpose, he plunged him into the stream, and kept ducking him for a quarter of an hour, saying, at every successive plunge, “ Take that, and that, and that, and that. Oh, how hot you were awhile ago, my young

master ! you were badly in want of a good cooling, and bad luck to my buttons but I'll give it to you with the vengeance."

Fitzroy made repeated efforts to implore mercy, but his accents were inarticulate, from the bubbling of the water in his mouth.

"Do you remember," said Boney, "how eager you were to know all about Baus gaun Soggarth, the night we all dined in the ould castle? I believe you know more than you like about him now. You must needs draw his picture, too, in your book—Faix *I* dhrew his picture on your elbow! 'Irish weapons!' 'Pon my conscience, my buck, you'll be able to give 'em a good chapter about Irish weapons, *now*, I think, and Irish girls, faix! and Irish duckings, too."

When Bonaparte's anger was in some sort appeased, he pulled Fitzroy out of the water, and bestowing a sound kick upon his dorsal extremity, sent him, dripping and shivering

about his business, with the further admonition, that he had better take care how he returned to Father O'Connor's.

This admonition was unnecessary to the trembling, perished, mangled, half-drowned wretch, who crawled rather than walked, to Beamish's inn at the cross roads, whence he sent a boy to Dwyer's-Gift for his servant and portmanteau. The servant soon arrived, and the instant that he changed his clothes, and got his arm bandaged by a cow-doctor (the vicinage not affording a more expert practitioner in the surgical art), he mounted his horse, and rode to the village of Knockanea, whose Esculapius dressed his arm, and recommended quiet. But Fitzroy was desirous to escape from the neighbourhood, and hired a chaise, in which he proceeded to Martagon, whither he and his brother had received an invitation to shoot, from Colonel Nugent. The elder Mordaunt had ridden over to Kavanagh's residence, in

the morning, to pay his devotion to Isabella. Fitzroy augured that his brother's chance of Isabella's hand might be somewhat affected, should his own adventure with the Howlaghans transpire. But he did not feel very despondent about this consideration, for his confidence in his brother's *sçavoir faire* was very great, and if the worst came to the worst, Mordaunt might disclaim all sympathy of feeling or affection with Fitzroy, and assume the horrified saint on the occasion, which, if necessary, no man could do better.

CHAPTER X.

Do, sweet nymph, have pity on me, and let not the hardness of thine heart belie the softness of thine eye.

MUZROUR KUFFNOO ZYDDARQUI.

WHEN O'Sullivan reached Martagon, he was received with the warmest expressions of delight by Colonel Nugent and Lucinda.

"And so you *are* come at last," said Lucinda: "How anxiously my brother and I have expected this day! To-morrow we will revisit all our childish haunts together, and you shall come and see old Peter, our superannuated gardener; the poor old creature is still alive, and dying to see you."

The morrow came, and O'Sullivan accom-

panied Lucinda to the scenes which, from early recollections, were dearest to his heart. They sauntered through the woods, and along the seashore, and did not return to the house until the afternoon was tolerably far advanced. Ere the company retired before dinner, a chaise arrived, whose contents quickly appeared in the shape of Mr. Fitzroy Mordaunt, looking interestingly pale and woe-begone, with his arm in a sling.

“So, Fitzroy, my dear fellow—what has happened to you?” said Colonel Nugent, advancing to meet him.

“I met with an accident,” replied the invalid.

“An accident?” repeated Lucinda, “it must have been a serious one; do let us hear all about it.”

“Yesterday morning,” said Fitzroy, “I was walking among the wild steep crags that overhang the river of Glen Minnis, and at the narrowest and most dangerous part of the path I

met an old woman with a basket on her shoulder, picking her tottering and feeble steps along the giddy verge. The poor old creature seemed sadly oppressed with the weight of her burden, and she looked up at me, I thought, as if she implored assistance, although her humility, or diffidence, prevented her from asking it. In common humanity I could not avoid offering to carry her basket. She gratefully accepted my aid; but in trying to take it from her shoulder, she lost her balance, and fell over the edge of the steep into the river. I made an effort to save her, my foot slipped, and I fell into the water, receiving several severe contusions from the large rough stones that projected from the side of the steep. My arm was shockingly dislocated, but I do not mind the pain, as I had the inexpressible satisfaction of preserving the poor old woman from drowning."

O'Sullivan listened to the narrative of Fitzroy's generous self-devotedness, without any

very implicit faith in the narrator's veracity. An old clergyman, who was present, lauded him greatly, and compared his conduct to that of the charitable Samaritan. Fitzroy received his praises as a matter of course, interposing a few modest phrases of disclaimer.

"Where is Mordaunt?" asked Colonel Nugent.

"At Dwyer's Gift; he occasionally visits at Castle Kavanagh."

"Doing anything there? eh?" asked Nugent, in a low and confidential tone.

"Oh yes—he has been quite successful," responded Fitzroy in the same tone.

"Glad of it," said Nugent; "Isabella Kavanagh is a charming girl, and will have, I am certain, a very large fortune."

"Do you know precisely how much?" asked Fitzroy.

"No—can't say I do—your brother, I suppose, has ascertained all that—but her uncle

Kavanagh, and her other uncle, Browne, are both able to settle very handsomely."

Fitzroy was struck with the similarity of Colonel Nugent's answer, to all the answers that his brother had received to his inquiries. Every one had told him of the wealth of Miss Kavanagh's uncles; every one presumed they must make a very handsome settlement upon her, but nobody could ever tell how much they were to give, although young ladies are usually rated at a specified sum. No such specification appeared to have been made in Isabella's case; but some persons hinted that Kavanagh would make her the heiress of his large estates, as he was childless, and had not any near male relative who seemed at all likely to interfere with Isabella's succession. People spoke with greater certainty about her uncle Browne's intentions; he had repeatedly been heard to say he would make her the wealthiest match in the county, but he had cautiously abstained from committing

himself further than by general declarations, which were never made personally, to either Isabella or her mother.

But the rumour of these promises and prospects, and the manifest and undoubted wealth of the family, seemed to Mordaunt to furnish sufficient security that he was perfectly *safe* in making the offer of his hand. "They're as rich as Jews," he argued, "and they certainly must and will give the girl something solid; they have no one else to give it to, unless that distant cousin, whom, by the bye, I understand old Kavanagh does not like. But after all, it is really strange, very strange, that living in the house with such a near and wealthy relative, by whom she seems beloved, Miss Kavanagh's fortune should still seem to float among the regions of uncertainty."

But Mordaunt thought that the chances in Isabella's favour far overbalanced this last mentioned drawback, and accordingly he plied his

suit with unremitting assiduity. He solicited permission from Mrs. Kavanagh and Isabella to correspond with the young lady, which was readily accorded. In the intervals between his visits at Castle Kavanagh, therefore, a brisk fire of sentimental billets doux was kept up, of which the greater number, indeed, were transmitted through the servants of the parties, although it sometimes happened, when the servants at Castle Kavanagh were otherwise particularly occupied, that a Pacolet was necessarily selected from some of the numerous loungers and runners who are often found loitering about a large establishment.

It chanced, at this period, that the persevering Mr. Jonathan Lucas made a grand final effort to obtain a promise of marriage from Miss Kavanagh. His hopes had been kept alive by the circumstance, that, notwithstanding the young lady's previous rejection of his suit, his visits were still permitted by her family ;

and her mother's manner appeared to him quite as friendly and hospitable as ever.

" Either she has mentioned my addresses to her mother and uncle, or she has not ;" thus argued the logical swain : " if she has, it is perfectly evident, from the continued friendliness of their manner, that they do not disapprove of the match ; if she has not, I take her silence as an evidence that I am not at all disagreeable to her ; and in either case, all her wincing and shying is the veriest coquetry. I will still pursue the attack ; as for Mordaunt, I do not fear his rivalry ; he's a handsome figure, certainly, but not quite so piquant as I am ;" [Mr. Jonathan Lucas was all but hump-backed ;] " and as for conversation,—why the fellow has a vast deal of small talk, undoubtedly, but not one iota of logic in his whole composition."

Full of his resolve to persevere, Mr. Jonathan Lucas embodied his pathetic and per-

suasive appeal in the form of a letter, which he sent to Castle Kavanagh, and awaited the return of his messenger with a lover's impatience. Thus ran the amorous effusion of Jonathan :—

“ TO MISS ISABELLA KAVANAGH.

“ Never, since the hour when the vital spark first enlivened the matter of which I am composed, did I feel so inexpressibly perplexed as on the present occasion. My faculties are involuntarily obfuscated ; the concatenation of my ideas is thoroughly unhinged, and a mental chaos supersedes the usual logical order and precision of my sentiments. I have begun this letter seventeen times, and consigned to the flames sixteen different protestations of the deep, the ineffable affection with which you incomparable excellence inspires me.

“ I do not know how I should address you.

Profound respect and ardent love wage a bitter conflict for the mastery. If I should adopt a style corresponding with the former feeling, an air of frigidity might unwittingly pervade an effusion which comes straight from a heart that glows with the concentrated ardour of ten thousand furnaces. If, on the other hand, I should yield to the dictates of passion, they might betray my pen into expressions of familiarity altogether incompatible with the deep respect I unaffectedly experience for you. You perceive that I am wedged between the sharply-pointed horns of a cruel dilemma. *You* alone, adored Miss Kavanagh, are able to unhorn me, by the total annihilation of the wicked dilemma in question: for *you*, most beloved and respected of women! can tell me how I *ought* to address you; and oh! may I beg, may I pray, may I earnestly entreat, may I anxiously implore, that your answer may be kind and favourable? Permit me, beloved and respected

Miss Kavanagh, to suggest, that our union could not possibly be otherwise than supremely blissful; for, whence, I would demand, does connubial felicity arise? what is its origin? what is its source? Beyond a question, identity of taste, community of mind, between the married parties. Permit me, again, to insinuate, that this originating cause of married happiness exists in perfection between us. You are musical. So am I. You are literary. So am I. You are fond of children. So am I,—*very*. Your mind is naturally logical. *My* thoughts spontaneously frame themselves in syllogisms, sorites, dilemmas, and all the choicest forms of the art of reasoning. Blessed, then, with a perfect identity of mind, so unusual, and *to me* so flattering, how could our union be productive of other results than superlative felicity?

“ Permit me, once again, to present to your mind, a little picture which has frequently

floated, in colours of brilliant enchantment, before my entranced imagination; O! may it be found to possess equal charms for *you*!

“What, for example, do you think of a social, matrimonial evening; an accomplished pair gazing with intense affection on each other, as their highly intellectual conversation affords mutual delight and improvement. Wit sparkles, music enlivens, history instructs. Of the husband’s ponderous legal tomes, [N.B. last week I purchased half-a-hundred-weight of law books;] one or two volumes appear upon a writing-table, indicating that he carries with him, even into his hours of relaxation, an unceasing devotion to the noble study of our jurisprudence. Tokens of the wife’s light and elegant employments are also visible, while the social hearth is cheered by—O! Isabella! pardon a fond lover’s raptured dream!—two rosy cherubs, one of whom, a lively, sportive, little fellow, is named—

suppose we say Jonathan? and gives every promise to inherit whatever share of intellectual capacity his parent may be deemed to possess; while the other little pledge of love is christened Isabella, and is endeared to her father's doating heart by the strong resemblance she bears to her incomparable mother.

" Confess, O ! loveliest of women, if Jonathan has not sketched off a little scene of paradise?

" My hand and heart now tremble. My doom depends upon your breath. Despising the circumlocutory modes in which men of ordinary minds, in general, solicit an answer to the most important, the most interesting of all queries, I come directly to the point, and I ask, though with feelings of painfully intense anxiety,

" MISS ISABELLA KAVANAGH, WILL YOU MARRY ME ?

“ Will you marry your affectionate, your admiring, your impatient, your devoted, your obedient, humble servant,

“ JONATHAN LUCAS?

“ Barrister-at-Law,
(of Lucastown, county of Cork, and 191,
Grafton-street, Dublin).”

Mr. Jonathan Lucas was compelled to wait for an answer to this letter until the following day, for Miss Kavanagh was from home, and the time of her return was uncertain.

The lady's reply was brief:—

“ Sir,

“ I felt extremely astonished at the subject of your letter of yesterday. I have sufficiently expressed, upon former occasions, my decided and unalterable rejection of your suit; and I now feel compelled to desire that you

may, for the future, desist from troublesome and impertinent importunity.

“ I am, Sir,

“ Your obedient servant,

“ ISABELLA KAVANAGH.”

Pursuing the mistaken policy which had hitherto prevented her from speaking to her mother on the subject of Jonathan's attentions, Isabella was equally silent on the present occasion. She did not wish to excite the curiosity of the family by sending one of the servants to Lucastown with her letter; so she gave it in charge to a boy who had sometimes officiated as pacolet for Mordaunt, and who was now commissioned by Miss Kavanagh to bear an epistle to her more fortunate suitor. Our story requires the insertion of her billet to Mordaunt.

“ Many thanks for your's, which came while

I was absent from home yesterday. I was much pleased with what you said about the books. As to the other affair, why are you so cruelly pressing? you know you are possessed of my heart, although, perhaps, I ought not to confess it; but as I am anxious that Miss Wharton may be my bridesmaid, I am compelled to defer our marriage until her arrival.

“ Ever your affectionate

“ ISABELLA KAVANAGH.”

“ Now,” said Isabella, as she gave her letters to the boy, “ you are sure you know which of these letters to take to Lucastown, and which to Dwyer’s Gift ? ”

“ To be sure I does, Miss.”

“ Well, show me which.”

“ Dis one is for Mr. Mordaunt, and dis one is for Mr. Lucas.”

“ No, you stupid creature, you are quite wrong. I will tie a bit of silk about Mr.

Mordaunt's letter, and then you can make no mistake."

"That will do very well Miss, if you please."

Isabella tied the silk to mark her lover's letter, and the messenger went off with his despatches. He was proceeding rapidly along, when he met Mr. Jonathan Lucas himself, at a part of the road about a mile from Castle Kavanagh.

"I've got a bit of a letter for you, Sir," he cried, hailing Jonathan, who immediately pulled up; the boy extracted a letter from the intricate depths of a tattered pocket, and not only did the envelope of wrapping-paper in which it was prudently enclosed, rub off in the process of extraction, but the red silk rubbed off also, so that the urchin, losing his distinguishing mark, handed Mordaunt's epistle to Jonathan.

Jonathan immediately perceived that it was not intended for him; but being somewhat unscrupulous, he opened it without hesitation; his jealous curiosity being strongly aroused by

the direction on the cover, which he instantly recognized as Isabella's handwriting. His rage was great on finding, from the perusal, that Isabella was actually betrothed to Mordaunt; he panted for vengeance, and he mentally resolved to omit no opportunity of wreaking it, if possible, on the heads both of Mordaunt and the lady.

Fraught with these amiable intentions, our disappointed lover pursued his way, when his attention was caught by a letter he descried upon the road, and which he immediately dismounted to pick up. It was the very epistle Isabella had written in reply to his eloquent production, and had fallen on the ground through a hole in the pocket of the stupid messenger. Its perusal wrought up Jonathan's ire to the highest extreme of inveterate hatred. "I taught her *once*," soliloquised the discarded swain, "how to make love in syllogisms; I'll teach her now another form of logic—a dilemma;

and curse me if I don't get her into as tight a one as ever girl was wedged in,—*if I can.*"

Meanwhile Mordaunt was hastening on the wings of love to make a morning visit at Castle Kavanagh.

"Did you receive my letter?" asked Isabella.

"No—I suppose the messenger went the other road."

"Probably," said Isabella; it was not of any consequence."

The lovers said all they had to say upon the topics which pressed at the time, and the subject of the note was completely forgotten. Mordaunt pressed his suit with eagerness, and expressed a wish to see Mr. Kavanagh, in order to enter upon certain preliminary arrangements.

"You cannot see my uncle," said Isabella, "until he returns from France."

"From France! You astonish me. When did he go there?"

"He set out this morning, in consequence

of a very unexpected summons he received last night to attend the dying hours of a relative, from whom he had long been estranged, and who has recently become desirous of a reconciliation."

When Mordaunt took his leave, he was met by an acquaintance he had recently formed; one of those loose hangers-on of society, those idle, talkative, scampering personages, who are usually first in the field of gossiping intelligence.

"Happy to see you Mr. Mordaunt; fine day this," said Captain Webster. Mordaunt courteously returned his greeting.

"Have you heard—I suppose, of course, you have," said the communicative captain, "of the blow-up at Castle Kavanagh?"

"No," said Mordaunt, "I hope no misfortune has occurred."

"Why only that Browne, Mrs. Henry Kavanagh's brother, has failed for an immense sum of money, and has flown off to France, to

escape from his creditors; and Kavanagh, they say, has followed him there, being in some way involved in the scrape. Though I must confess I don't see precisely how Kavanagh can have been in any manner involved in Browne's failure, as he had not the smallest concern, that any body knew of, in Browne's mercantile establishment."

"So Browne was a merchant?" said Mordaunt.

"Yes; he was one of the first wine-merchants in Dublin. The pride of the Kavanaghs revolted against the connexion, and old Kavanagh would not speak to his brother Henry for many years after his marriage; but at length when Henry died, he relented, and has ever since been extremely kind to his widow and her daughter."

"He means, I believe," said Mordaunt, "to give Miss Isabella Kavanagh a large fortune."

"There is no saying what he will do; he is a whimsical oddity; sometimes he says he will

leave her everything, and at other times he says he will leave his estates to some cousin who resides in Dublin. I know I would not give much for Miss Kavanagh's chance, if her uncle took a crotchet in his head."

"But Miss Kavanagh will doubtless be otherwise very well provided for?" said Mordaunt, who felt rather uncomfortable at the nature of the information his talkative companion so liberally gave. "Her mother, of course, had a good fortune?"

"She *had* a good fortune, until her husband spent it: Mr. Henry Kavanagh was extremely extravagant, and ran through almost every farthing she had."

When Mordaunt arrived at Dwyer's Gift, the news of Browne's bankruptcy and flight, was confirmed by a gentleman who dined there; this gentleman did not believe that Mr. Kavanagh's journey to France had any connexion whatever with the movements of Browne; but

his information too fully demonstrated that *one* large source, at least, of Isabella's expectations, was cut off.

Painfully revolving in the mind this unpleasant intelligence, Mordaunt retired after dinner to his own apartment, in order to deliberate uninterruptedly upon the course he should adopt.

"I have not any relish," quoth he, "for an Irish *tuke in*; I fear I have committed myself rashly and imprudently. That Kavanagh *could*, if he pleased, give Isabella wealth, is nothing to the purpose, if the strange and capricious old oddity does *not* please; and whether he will or no, nobody can tell. What can I best do? I think I'll return to London, and leave them all in the lurch. It would be shabby, to be sure—but incomparably better than to marry a girl whose fortune is to be derived from a bankrupt and a whimsical old humorist, who does not know his own intentions two days

together. Oh! I was dreadfully imprudent, in not having learned all about Miss Kavanagh's fortune from her uncle's mouth, before I committed myself with Isabella; but there seemed such a certainty of wealth, that I thought I was safe; and I also considered that the course I adopted would wear an appearance of disinterestedness. What *shall* I do? I do believe I had better go to London, and leave the fair Bankruptina to wear the willow—or shall I stay, and fight something out of Kavanagh upon his return?"

CHAPTER XI.

There is a tide in the affairs of man.

SHAKESPEARE.

WE ended our last chapter by detailing the woeful perplexity in which Mr. Mordaunt was placed, by the doubts that appeared to encircle Isabella's inheritance. His mind was pretty equally balanced between the project of returning to London, and that of waiting for Kavanagh's return, in order to try if he could extract from the old gentleman a liberal settlement for Isabella. In this state of indecision, he received a letter from a London friend, at whose house a certain Miss Celestina Fancourt was at present on a visit; and the said Celestina was stated in the letter to revert with infinite

tenderness to certain former meetings with Mordaunt, and to ask with the deepest anxiety whether Mordaunt was shortly expected to return to London.

“In a word,” concluded the letter-writer, “Celestina is dying for love of you; she has got ten thousand pounds; now is the critical moment of your fortune, my dear fellow; you can have her if you wish; such a promising *parti* may never again offer; so come, secure your good fortune while you can, and marry Celestina.”

This letter determined our hero; he bade a hasty farewell the next day to Father O'Connor, whom he thanked for his hospitality; and taking what is termed “French leave” of the inhabitants of Castle Kavanagh, the faithless Corydon set sail for Bristol in the next Cork packet, speeded to London, and married Celestina forthwith.

Isabella was astounded, when she heard

that her lover had quitted the country without bidding her farewell; but great as was her astonishment on this occasion, it was increased when she read the following announcement in the newspapers, scarcely more than a fortnight after his sudden departure:—

“ Married on the 10th instant at St. George’s, Hanover Square, Augustus Stanley Mordaunt, of Mordaunt Hall in Yorkshire, Esq., to Celestina, third daughter of the late General Fancourt.”

Mrs. Mersey called on Mrs. Kavanagh, to offer her condolence on the loss of the expected bridegroom: “ How provoking,” said she, “ that you should have taken the trouble of making all those inquiries respecting Mr. Mordaunt’s temper, and his habits, and his property; I really feel very much for your disappointment, my dear friend; one looks so ridiculous in losing an acquisition such as Mordaunt would have been, after the whole

country had expected the arrangement. I really pity you excessively."

Mrs. Kavanagh endeavoured to make Mrs. Mersey comprehend that she did not feel any disappointment ; that Mordaunt would have been no acquisition ; and that she did not stand in need of pity. But Mrs. Mersey would not understand one syllable of this, and continued to inflict her commiseration with mortifying pertinacity.

" But how do you mean," asked Mrs. Kavanagh, " that the whole country had expected the marriage? I never heard it spoken of, and I really had believed that it was wholly unknown to every creature except yourself."

" My dear friend, I was really so delighted at the prospect of Isabella's happiness, that I could not resist the temptation of mentioning the affair to poor dear Lady Ballyvallin, who was equally delighted, I assure you. But nothing can equal her ladyship's indignation at Mor-

daunt's unhandsome desertion. She was really furious, when she heard it; and I can tell you that she will make it a particular point to speak of Mordaunt's ungentlemanlike conduct everywhere, and she will not spare him, you may rely on it."

" Good heaven, Mrs. Mersey ! do not, I entreat you, allow Lady Ballyvallin to render more public such a circumstance ; it is really bad enough to be ill-used, but it is intolerable to have it made the subject of universal commentary."

" Oh, all the world know it now : and really I think they *ought* to know it, in order that Mordaunt may at least incur the penalty of general censure."

Mrs. Mersey took her leave, having accompanied her amiable purpose of annoying and mortifying Mrs. Kavanagh in the highest degree. " And so, mamma," said Isabella, " every one is talking of the way in which

Mordaunt has treated me? it is dreadfully annoying, certainly—I cannot bear to remain in this part of the country. Do, dear mamma, let us go to Dublin at once ; it is torture to me to remain here.”

A journey to Dublin was decided on.

CHAPTER XII.

There is a spot, a holy spot,
A refuge for the wearied mind,
Where earth's wild visions are forgot,
And Love, thy poison spells untwined.

There learns the withered heart to pray,
There gently breaks earth's weary chain ;
Nay, let me weep my life away—
Let me do all, but love again !

REV. G. CROLY.

A DIFFICULTY of rather an unwonted nature now presented itself. Mrs. Kavanagh's funds were rather low, and she had not any mode of replenishing them until her brother's return from France. He allowed her a fixed annual income, of limited amount ; her last supply of

which was now nearly exhausted. She could not write to her brother for money, being wholly unacquainted with his address; and Isabella's dislike to remain in a place where each day exposed her to incursions from Lady Jacintha, or Lady Ballyvallin, or Mrs. Mersey, or Mrs. Curwen, or other sympathetic and condoling friends, to whom the fair widow had sedulously communicated the desertion of the faithless Mordaunt, increased to such a painful degree, that her mother resolved on an immediate departure. To travel post was quite out of the question; so the plan resolved on was to proceed in Mr. Kavanagh's carriage as far as the town of —; whence they were to travel in the public conveyances to Dublin.

Accordingly they quitted Castle Kavanagh at the early hour of six, on a fine, frosty, starlight, winter's morning. The object of this early migration was twofold; firstly, to avoid all possibility of encountering any of Isabella's compas-

sionate female acquaintance on the road; and secondly, to spare the fat and lazy coach horses, by giving them ample time to perform their journey; a point on which the coachman expended much eloquence.

When the carriage stopped at the entrance to the park, Isabella said with a sigh, "How long it may be until I shall revisit these scenes!"

"You may do so under happier auspices, my love," replied her mother. "Mordaunt is a sad fellow, certainly: but from the exhibition he has made of his real disposition, I think you are exceedingly fortunate in being well rid of him."

This might be all very true; but it fell coldly and painfully on Isabella's ear; her heart had been wounded, and notwithstanding the abhorrence that her faithless lover's fickleness deserved, she could not hate him; his image still lay treasured in her bosom, and her

grief contained but very little mixture of bitterness.

Towards noon they stopped at a solitary inn on the road-side, to refresh John and the horses; and the fair travellers, not feeling inclined to enter the uninviting hostelry, proceeded to examine its immediate environs.

Leaning on the arm of Isabella, Mrs. Kavanagh crossed a low and broken wall, the remains of an enclosure which seemed to have once surrounded an extensive park. They were met by a peasant, of whom Isabella inquired the name of the desolate demesne in which they found themselves.

“ Conela, Ma’am,” was the peasant’s reply

“ Conela !” repeated Mrs. Kavanagh ? “ we cannot be far from the convent.”

“ Yes, plase your honour ; it isn’t a quarter of a mile lower down by the sea-shore.”

“ Will you guide us there, my good fellow ?”

“ With all the pleasure in life, Ma’am.”

“ I never was here before,” said Mrs. Kavanagh, addressing her daughter, “ and I am really glad that John selected this road, for it gives me an opportunity of seeing my old friend the abbess, who has often invited me to visit her.”

They returned for a moment to the inn, to inform the servants of their destination, and then, under the guidance of the peasant, they re-entered the precincts of the ancient park.

The park of Conela was wild and extensive. The appearance of the mansion was heavy, as it once had been a castle, of which a part had been taken down, and the remainder modernised by the late proprietor, a Dublin merchant, who had purchased the estate from the Ballyvallin family, to whom it had originally belonged. It had subsequently been sold, to support its new owner's extravagance. The house had fallen into ruins. The front of the building was shaded, in part, by the clusters of luxuriant

ivy that hung at mid-height from a blasted ash, *almost* the only remnant of the woods of Conela. Still faithful in decay, it drooped its withered head, as if in sorrow for its venerable brothers of the forest, whose fall it had out-lived.

Our travellers advanced through a path that ascended the side of a glen, which was thickly covered with dwarf coppice. The spray of a waterfall that fell from the rocks on the opposite bank, was caught through the partial openings among the trees: arbutus, holly, and other evergreen shrubs, skirted the path, as, emerging from the glen, it wound along the shores of a sheltered bay of the Atlantic. A little farther on was a grove of ancient oaks, beyond which, partly in ruins, stood the moss-grown convent of Conela. The trees with which it was surrounded, had been spared at the earnest intercession of the sisters who occupied the habitable part of the convent,

and afforded a magnificent specimen of the ancient grandeur of the forest. The oaks of ages past joined their massive and rugged branches over the ruined aisles and roofless cloisters, thus furnishing in summer a living canopy of foliage, where the work of man had fallen to decay.

Isabella was involuntarily soothed by the peaceful scene around, that slept beneath the noontide of a day, which, although in the wintry month of January, seemed to anticipate the warmth of spring. Its deep tranquillity was heightened, rather than disturbed, by the gentle murmurs of the sea below, which crept, with whispering steps, upon the sandy beach.

“What a lovely spot!” she exclaimed; “the very scene is sufficient to dispose the lightest heart to meditation! And *I* ——”

A sigh closed the unfinished sentence; Mrs. Kavanagh was also silent.

“Perhaps,” said Isabella, after a pause, “it

were happier for me to take refuge in the bosom of religious retirement, from the storms of this billowy life ! It might spare me many hours of disquiet and misfortune. I am sure these poor nuns enjoy a serenity unknown to the sons and daughters of the world. Beneficent, beloved by all around them, their existence is devoted to assuage the sorrows of their lowly fellow beings. Delightful occupation ! The blessings, the comforts they impart, return with rich interest to their bosoms in the happy tranquillity they enjoy."

" I do not think, Isabella," said Mrs. Kavanagh, smiling, " that you will ever adopt the veil, notwithstanding your present fit of conventual enthusiasm. But here comes my old friend—I am sure I know her step and her figure, although so many years have elapsed since we met."

As Mrs. Kavanagh spoke, the abbess appeared ; she would not have recognised her

visitor, whose appearance had yielded to the changing influence of years, if she had not introduced herself. The meeting was warm and affectionate, and the abbess invited her friends to spend some time at the convent.

A few whispered words from Mrs. Kavanagh explained that Isabella's dislike to remain for the present at her uncle's, was the cause of their journey; on which the abbess pressed them warmly to continue for some time at the convent, observing that it afforded Isabella the desired seclusion from her unpleasant acquaintance, as effectually as a sojourn in Dublin could.

"Do, Mamma," said Isabella; "*do* accept the abbess's kind invitation; I wish to have an opportunity of seeing conventual life, and of ascertaining, from my own observation, if the sisters are as happy as I am strongly inclined to imagine they are."

But Mrs. Kavanagh was inexorable, and pe-

remptorily refused to remain at Conela longer than a day; which period she conceded, although not without some difficulty, to her daughter's importunity.

'They were now at the gate of the convent, which they had reached by pursuing a natural terrace that led from the ruined cloisters.

" Quite round the pile, a row of reverend oaks,
Coeval near with that, all ragged show,
Long lashed by the rude winds; some rift half down
Their branchless trunks; others so thin a-top,
That scarce two crows could lodge in the same tree.
Strange things, the neighbours say, have happened here;
Wild shrieks have issued from the hollow tombs,
Dead men have come again, and walked about,
And the great bell has toll'd, unrun, untouch'd."

" Beautiful lines," said the abbess, when Mrs. Kavanagh had repeated them; " but in some respects not precisely descriptive of the present scene; for our few old oaks are still healthy and luxuriant, and so far from being unable to accommodate *two crows*, their

branches, as you see, sustain a rookery. And the inmates of the tombs remain in quiet occupation of their dark abodes—they have never revisited us, I assure you.”

They now entered the low stone-roofed passage that led into the convent; at its inner extremity was the parlour, a plain, unadorned apartment, of small dimensions. On its whitened walls hung two well-executed pictures; one of them represented Saint Augustin composing his “*Civitas Dei*,” and the other was a portrait of Saint Ursula. A nun, who had been reading at the table, rose, as the abbess entered with her guests.

“Sister Martha,” said the abbess, “I commend these ladies, for an hour, to your hospitable care.” She then introduced them to each other, and left the apartment.

Sister Martha was still young, although she had passed the bloom of early youth; her features were expressive of refined benevolence.

She entered into conversation with Isabella and her mother, and the whole party soon became excellent friends. Isabella expressed a desire to see the convent, with which the nun immediately complied, and conducted her through the ancient building, of which the only portion worthy of inspection was the chapel. Isabella, who was somewhat fatigued, took her seat on a bench near the altar; the nun also seated herself.

“Do you like your conventual life?” asked our heroine.

“Extremely,” answered sister Martha. “I would not exchange it for the cares and disquiets of the world, on any account.”

“And tell me,” resumed the fair querist, “have you *never*, upon any one occasion, regretted your adoption of the veil?”

“I must acknowledge that I *have* once or twice regretted it, when my memory reverted to a happy home, and to the faces of my brothers

and sisters smiling in cheerful affection round our father's fireside. But that momentary feeling of regret was a sinful emotion, which I tried to check as soon as it arose; and, thank heaven, I have not experienced it often."

"Why," asked Isabella, "do you deem it sinful?"

"Because the Holy Scripture says, 'when thou hast vowed a vow unto the Lord, thou shalt not slack to pay it.'"

"Would you, from your own experience, recommend the veil to *me*?"

"Unquestionably not, unless I knew more of your temper, disposition, and habits, than it is possible I should upon so short an acquaintance."

"What! not if I told you I was thoroughly disgusted with the world?"

"No; for your disgust may arise from some temporary cause, which circumstances, perhaps, may soon remove; and then your remaining life

would be miserably spent in useless and poignant regret. A state which is irrevocable should never be rashly entered on."

Isabella was silent for some moments, and felt strongly inclined to impart her own private sorrows to the amiable and rational nun; but she could not prevail on herself to pronounce Mordaunt's desertion in *articulated, audible words*. Except to her mother, she had never done so yet; besides which, a sense of incongruity struck her, in the notion of making sister Martha,—cool, rational, and calculating as she seemed,—the confidant of a love affair.

"I regret," said the nun, to break the silence, "that Mrs. Kavanagh cannot be prevailed on to prolong her stay with us."

"Really," replied Isabella, "I believe she fears that if she did so, I might become so enamoured of the convent as to take the veil in earnest."

“ Ah, Miss Kavanagh, your young fancy is charmed, perhaps, at the *picturesqueness* of seclusion, and your mind is influenced by some recent cause of sorrow; but,—I assure you I speak it without meaning to offend,—I think the zeal of a young person accustomed to gaiety, would be very soon cooled by conventual discipline; by the watchings, fastings, and austerities to which we are occasionally subject.”

“ I should like to try,” said Isabella.

“ Your year’s noviciate would exhaust your ardour.”

“ Will you allow me then to make the experiment to night? to be a nun, at least, for this one night?”

“ What? in the midst of winter, and *you* altogether unaccustomed to nocturnal orisons? Mrs. Kavanagh’s maternal concern for your health would be alarmed.”

“ Mamma is sometimes unnecessarily appre-

hensive ; but on this occasion she will not, I am sure, refuse to gratify my curiosity, provided I am warmly wrapped up."

The winter's sun sank early to his rest ; the evening passed agreeably, enlivened with the interesting conversation of the kind abbess, whose former residence on the continent supplied her with a fund of entertaining anecdotes of the time she had once spent in the Parisian great world.

" But those days are now gone," said she, " and I do not regret them. My experience teaches me the wisdom of King Solomon's exclamation, ' Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.' All, all indeed that exclusively appertains to this world is vanity ; all that exclusively fastens our thoughts on the empty delusions of a fleeting life, which the Christian should mainly consider as obstructing his progress to a happy eternity. We are cheerful here, Isabella, in the

midst of a cemetery. What a lesson we receive, every time that we look from our windows on the tombstones beneath! Into that eternal, invisible world, upon which the dead have entered, we ourselves must shortly enter. What ineffable insanity in worldlings, to allow the concerns of *time*, to prevent them from preparing for that final, inevitable journey! O, it is good to gaze upon the homes of the silent dead. They will soon be *our* homes too. Every grave reads a startling lesson to the Christian. *How fares the soul of its inmate?* Let us ever keep in mind the saying of the blessed Paul. '*Now* is the acceptable time; *now* is the day of salvation.' Yes; now or never. What countless multitudes of the dead would give the universe, if they possessed it, for permission to live their lives over again, in order to avoid the fate they have incurred! But with *them* it is too late. Let us thank God, that with *us* it is not yet too late,

and invoke His assistance to serve Him faithfully here, that we may enjoy His glorious rest eternally hereafter."

As the abbess spoke, the notes of the vesper bell were heard; Isabella was strongly affected by the impressive solemnity of her appeal; and it was with moistened eyes and a throbbing bosom that she rose to follow her hostess and the nuns to the chapel. As they entered the low vaulted passage, sister Martha asked our heroine to accompany her through the cemetery walk, to which Isabella readily assented, having first providently cloaked herself, to guard against the night air.

The scene was sufficiently striking to arrest the admiration of a person more indifferent than Isabella to the wilder moods of nature. A shower of snow had fallen in the evening, and loaded the huge gnarled boughs of the old rugged oaks that surrounded the convent; they were tinged with a faint and ghastly light by the moon's early

crescent, which threw a sullen and imperfect beam on the dark sea beneath the rock, contrasting strangely with the reflection of the red lights from the chapel windows, that twinkled on the livid waters.

Notwithstanding the chilness of the night, Isabella was irresistibly induced by the strange, wild charm of the cold and quiet scene, to linger on the verge of the terrace. The sweet, low, measured chime of the convent-bell harmonized with her solemn emotions.

“ On *this* side of the terrace,” said sister Martha, pointing to the cloisters, “ are the abodes of the dead ; and on *that*, is the wide and trackless sea, an appropriate emblem of that world of boundless duration to which their God has called them.”

The bell now ceased, and the soft, liquid warbling of the organ was heard from within ; its upper notes were touched by a finger of no common delicacy, and the wild and plaintive

strain soon melted into chords of full, rich harmony. They left the terrace, and entering the chapel by a postern, united their devotions with those of the sisters.

The time wore apace, the vesper prayers concluded, and Isabella, overpowered with the weariness arising from excitement, retired to rest. She sank into a profound slumber, which was unbroken even by the chimes of prime, and lauds, that successively sounded on the silence of the night, startling, perhaps, from his repose, a sable denizen of the "rooky wood," whose wing would rustle for a moment in his airy nest.

CHAPTER XIII.

Then came an ancient man,
"Madame, your slave," quoth he;
"I know you not, Syr," said the dame.
The man said, "But I know thee."

OLD BALLAD.

THE following day was a festival, and the abbess succeeded in her efforts to induce Mrs. Kavanagh to prolong her sojourn at the convent.

"Your mother was inexorable yesterday," said sister Martha, smiling, "when the abbess besought her to remain a second day here; now that she has yielded so far, I hope that she may yield still further."

"I should hope so too," replied Isabella,

“ for I really wish I were permitted to try how a short noviciate would agree with me.”

“ Not much, I should fancy,” said Martha, “ to judge from the experience of last night ; I looked towards the chapel door, expecting your appearance at each of our nocturnal services and saw you not. Your zeal was short lived.”

“ The spirit was willing, sister Martha, but fatigue overcame me. Heaven knows, I needed rest.”

“ For a wearied spirit, or an exhausted body ? ” asked the nun.

“ For both.”

“ For both ? you did well, then, to seek repose ; although sleep will not always come at the bidding of a wearied spirit.”

“ That is one of the worst penalties of misfortune,” said Isabella.

“ But if sorrow scares slumber from our

pillow," said Martha, mildly, "still we have a soothing remedy in prayer."

"Oh, sister Martha," said Isabella fervently, "you are right—I have felt it—I have indeed felt it. If you but knew what I have recently suffered ——"

Isabella was on the point of confiding her grievances to sister Martha, and asking her counsel and sympathy; when the tolling of a bell summoned both to the chapel, where mass was about to commence.

"Come," said the nun, rising from her chair, "come to mass—if it will relieve your heart to commune with me on the subject of your griefs, I shall readily listen to you at another time. Think well, however, first, whether you might not hereafter regret having committed them to any person—even to me."

Isabella was silent, and followed Martha to the chapel.

The train of nuns walked up the aisle, preceded by the officiating clergyman, and a crucifer, or cross-bearer, who carried in his hand a large and beautifully-wrought ivory crucifix. When the nuns reached the choir, the hymn, "*Veni, Creator Spiritus*," was pealed from the organ; the strain was followed by a benediction, and then mass commenced.

Isabella knelt beneath a low stone arch, which formed a recess in the wall, and at whose farther end there was a small iron door; the ceiling of the arch was adorned with elaborate fret-work, upon which was emblazoned, at every intersection of the tracery, the crest of the sept of O'Sullivan Lyra,—a boar's head erased. Unheeding these fantastic decorations, she endeavoured to bend her whole soul to the exercises of devotion; and resting her head upon her hand, so as to exclude all perception of surrounding objects, she poured forth her spirit heavenwards, in earnest, inward prayer.

When mass was over, and the parting benediction had been given, the congregation rose to depart. Isabella still lingered, wrapt in devotional thoughts, and almost unconscious that she was now the sole occupant of the chapel. For several minutes she remained engrossed in solitary prayer, when her attention was arrested by the creaking of the iron door behind her. It was opened with as little noise as its rusty hinges would permit, and carefully closed again. A footstep paced along the arched passage, and in another moment a stranger knelt at Isabella's side. She did not allow this occurrence to disturb her, and refrained from looking at her new companion, until she had concluded her devotions. When, at length, she rose from her knees, and gazed around, she was struck by the singularly venerable, patriarchal figure of the stranger. His head was nearly bald, save that some few grey locks still fell from his temples on his shoulders: his

colour was fresh and healthful, and his clear blue eye quite unimpaired by age. His coat was made like the capuchin tunic, save that it wanted a hood; the material was the strong grey freize, in common use among the Leinster peasantry; round his waist was a black leather belt, whence depended a large rosary, the beads of which were ivory and oak. A silver crucifix was also appended to the belt, exclusively of that which appertained to the rosary. The penitent held it up with his left hand, while with his right he smote his breast, exclaiming, in accents of contrition,

“ Ostende nobis, Domine, misericordiam tuam*.”

His lips then silently moved for some moments, when with sudden energy he clasped his hands together, and in tones of the most

* Oh Lord, show us thy mercy.

solemn earnestness chaunted forth these verses
of an ancient Latin hymn :

“ Ne mens gravata crimine,
Vitæ sit exul munere ;
Dum nil perenne cogitat,
Seseque culpis illigat.

“ Celeste pulsat ostium,
Vitale tollet præmium ;
Vitemus omne noxium ;
Pergemus omne pessimum.

“ Præsta, Pater piissime ;
Patrique compar Unice ;
Cum spiritu Paraclito,
Regnans per omne sæculum*.

The voice was clear and skilfully managed,
although slightly tremulous from the singer's

* The first two stanzas have thus been freely translated :—

“ Call not, O Lord, untimely hence,
Our spirits stained with deep offence,
To stand before thy awful bar,
Victims of sin's delusive snare !

age. Isabella, who had stood in the aisle regarding the old man with interest as well as admiration, now moved towards the door. But he instantly perceived her purpose, and waved his hand, as if requesting her to stay. Surprised at his doing so, she seated herself on a bench in the aisle, feeling curious to learn his motive for detaining her: he thanked her with a smile, and immediately resumed his offices of devotion, in which, for some minutes, he seemed buried. At length he rose, made a low genuflection towards the altar, and approaching our heroine, said, with a slight depression of his head,

“ But rather, while at mercy’s door,
Contrite, our treasons we deplore,
Oh! grant thy trembling suppliants peace,
And bid their sins and sorrows cease.

The third stanza is a doxology.

“ Lady, I would speak with you.”

Isabella bowed, in token of acquiescence.

The old man led the way to the cloister, and then said, “ This may appear a strange liberty, and so it would be, if I had not the warrant of being an old follower of your house for many a long year ; it is often, Miss Isabella Kavanagh, that I held you in these arms when you were a little infant.”

“ It is strange, then,” said Isabella, “ that I know you not.”

“ No, Miss Isabella ; it would be strange indeed if you knew me, for you never saw me since you were a little child ; but you may have heard my name. Did you ever hear your honoured uncle mention one Terence O’Leary ?”

“ I often did,” said Isabella.

“ I am he, Miss Kavanagh. I enlisted, and served in the army for several years ; I saw little except sin wherever I went ; men seemed

only emulous in trying who should most break God's commandments, and who should plunge the deepest into guilt. I was for a time as bad as any, but it pleased God to open my eyes to my miserable state. I have seen the reckless child of pleasure carried suddenly hence to meet his God, with blasphemy upon his tongue, and pollution in his heart. A voice seemed to whisper in my ear, 'O, man, may it not be even thus with thyself?'—I shuddered, and felt as though I were plucked from the verge of a pit into which I was about to fall. I deserted my evil associates, betook myself to prayer, and I trust received grace to think savingly upon those sacred truths which form our only safe guide here and our only hope hereafter. I was eager to quit the army; a generous friend gave me money to buy my discharge; and having shortly after, been left by a relation enough to support me without depending on my labour, I have indulged my inclination to spend a

large part of every day in the holy House of God, before His altar."

"I am glad," said Isabella, "to see an old follower of our family, so happy in the enjoyment of a healthful and virtuous old age. Remember me, Father, in your prayers; I shall remember you in mine. May God bless you, and give you peace now, and in your closing hour."

And she extended her hand to the old man, as if bidding him farewell. He caught it, and reverently pressed it to his lips.

"But, lady, you do not go yet," said he; "I have not said my say." And he paused, as though he felt some awkwardness in giving expression to his thoughts. "Look, Miss Kavanagh, at the crest that is carved over this old arch—the boar's head—know you, lady, of what house this crest is the cognizance?"

"How scholarly you talk of crests," exclaimed the lady.

“ Why should you marvel at my scholarship ?” demanded the old man ; “ am I not from Kerry, where Latin, in my early days, was nearly as current as Irish ; and where every man knows the ensigus-armorial of, at least, the great houses to which he or his kin have been fosterers ? and have I not been reader, now and then, to the Reverend Provincial of the Augustinians ?”

“ Pardon me,” said Isabella, “ I meant not to offend you.”

“ Pardon *you*, my sweet lady ! you could not offend your old servant. But know you to what house the crest of the boar’s head belongs ?”

“ To my shame be it spoken, I do not,” replied Isabella.

“ Indeed it is a shame for you, Miss Kavanagh. For that crest might yet—forgive my boldness, lady—that crest might yet, with God’s guidance and blessing, become *your own*.”

“ Mine? how mean you, old man?”

“ I mean this, lady—that I have prayed long and often, that you, the sweet child of my beloved master, might yet be the bride of the best, the truest Christian gentleman that ever yet scorned the snares and devices of the world, and walked in the path of honour and the Gospel—the generous friend who saw that my spirit was chafed among my profligate comrades in the army, and from a store too scanty for his princely heart, gave me—it is now twelve years ago, and he was but a stripling then—a free gift of the money that purchased my discharge.”

Isabella looked inquiringly.

“ Come, young lady—you pretend you know not whom I mean. O’Sullivan Lyra is the man—may Heaven bless him! But I crave your pardon, Miss Kavanagh—I have been too bold for my station.”

“ Old man, you have taken an inexcusable liberty,” responded Isabella; “ your motives

may be good, for what I know, but no motives can excuse your unwarrantable freedom; you presume far too much on the licence allowed to old followers. This sacred place, I think, should have protected me, independently of any other consideration."

"Oh! lady, do not judge me harshly. Do not go, without hearing me ask pardon, if I have offended you."

Isabella had re-entered by the cloister door into the chapel, and was quickly proceeding down the aisle.

"Stay yet, lady—do not part from me in anger—only let me hear you say that you forgive me.—She is gone! she will not listen to me."

Isabella had advanced to the great entrance, but was constrained to re-enter the chapel by a keen shower of sleet. Terence O'Leary forthwith took advantage of her re-appearance. "Lady, cast not happiness away from you—I plead for

O'Sullivan—I plead for his happiness and your's, in this solemn spot, beneath the ancient arch that was reared by his fathers, and over the old vault that contains their mortal relics. Lady, do not thwart me—only say that you will think of it,—that you will not reject my assistance.”

Isabella, although highly displeased, could not help smiling at Terence's enthusiastic pertinacity; at the same time assuring him that he was utterly mistaken in supposing that the alliance he contemplated could ever be effected.

“ I almost feel wrong in having listened, though inadvertently, to any thing you could say on such a subject,” she gravely added; “ but I respect your grey hairs, and I have often heard my uncle speak in warm terms of your tried and faithful services. I say this,” continued she, “ for I really feel that I need an excuse; I do not say more, for I do not wish to hurt your feelings; and I now desire that you will dismiss the subject from your mind for ever.”

At this moment sister Martha entered with cloaks and umbrellas.

"You were snow-bound here, Miss Kavanagh," said she. "Ha! old Terence! why did not you run to the parlour for these things? How came you here? I did not see you at mass."

"I was at early mass," said Terence, "at the parish chapel, and I came here, having heard from your sacristan that Miss Kavanagh and her honoured mother were staying at the convent; I was once a servant of their house."

"I marvel then," said the nun, "that you never went to Castle Kavanagh to visit them, since you came to this neighbourhood."

"I meant it," responded the old man; "but I have not been very long here, as sister Martha knows; and after I quitted the army, I had always stayed, till lately, at Bally-Sullivan, which you know is a good six-score miles away from this; and there I would still have re-

mained, only that Mr. O'Sullivan is going to leave it, and the Reverend Provincial invited me here. Ah! if Mr. O'Sullivan only had his rights! This estate once belonged to his forefathers, long, long, before the Ballyvallins got it, and *they* sold it afterwards to a man who was broke by the purchase, and had to sell it in his turn!. 'Sic transit gloria mundi!' Weiras-trua!"

As they issued from the portal of the chapel, the enthusiast could not avoid whispering to Isabella, "Think of what I said, Miss Kavanagh—think of what I said. Oh! if my vision of *your* happiness and *his* should come to pass, I would cry 'Nunc dimittis,' for my fondest earthly hopes would indeed be fulfilled."

CHAPTER XIV.

The snow clothed valley and the naked tree ;
These sympathising scenes my heart can please,
Distress is theirs, and they resemble me.

JOHN CLARE.

“ UPON my word,” thought Isabella, “ my venerable ex-military friend is exceedingly liberal of O’Sullivan’s hand—I rather think O’Sullivan would not feel inclined to confirm the old soldier’s liberality. Mamma is positively certain that O’Sullivan has made some arrangement with Lucinda Nugent—indeed I thought, two or three times, that I saw certain telegraphic tokens of intelligence between them, that one could not well mistake. Undoubtedly

O'Sullivan has many good points, and I think Lucinda is a fortunate girl. The fellow is exceedingly handsome, which is never overlooked by us women;—he is very intelligent—an incomparable moralist, and an incomparable fox-hunter. I saw him take a smashing leap across the old paddock wall, when a field full of horsemen were obliged to go a quarter of a mile round, and not a soul would venture to clear the wall except himself and the huntsman. Even Mordaunt rode round—” (here our soliloquist sighed)—“ heigho ! I trust and hope O'Sullivan may not break Lucinda's heart—If truth be in man, I would depend on him—there is in his manner a manly frankness and sincerity that seems wholly incompatible with deceit.”

As Isabella bestowed this mental eulogy upon O'Sullivan, she reached the convent parlour, in which Mrs. Kavanagh and the abbess were seated, enjoying the warmth of a blazing peat fire. The comfortable, warm little parlour

seemed more cozy from its contrast with the wintry scene without. The sleet shower was now over, but masses of snow clouds still hovered aloft, and the wild expanse of scrubby and disforested moorland was covered with a dazzling sheet, of three inches deep. And here and there a solitary oak upreared its black, forked, withered trunk, standing out in strong relief from the whitened waste around.

The fire-place occupied a corner of the room, adjoining a deep bay window, so that while seated by its genial hearth, you could look upon the park without. The ladies cast their eyes on its snow-clothed surface, and heaped fresh fuel on the fire.

"You lingered behind us in the chapel, Isabella," said Mrs. Kavanagh, pressing her daughter's hand affectionately.

"Yes, mother; and I formed an acquaintance there."

“ An acquaintance? with the statue of old Lord Cormac O’Callaghan?”

“ No—not with anybody’s statue, but with an old dependent of our family, Terence O’Leary.”

“ Ah, I remember Terence very well. He enlisted the year after I was married, got tired of the army, and was purchased out, as I heard, by young O’Sullivan, who was hardly more than a boy at the time;—I should like to see old Terence; he must be nearly sixty now—I did not observe him at mass.”

“ He entered the chapel after service, Mother, through the sacristan’s door, that opens on the little cloister. He seemed perfectly to know who *I* was, although of course I could not have any recollection of him.”

“ I suppose, my dear, he heard we were here, from some of the attendants?”

“ He is constantly here,” said the abbess;

“ he belongs to a confraternity to whom I have given permission to recite their rosaries and prayers in the convent-chapel.”

The casual mention of O’Sullivan’s name, led the abbess to detail many incidents connected with his boyhood and earlier youth : she was his aunt, and loved him with truly maternal affection.

“ He was ever a fearless and honourable fellow,” said she ; “ I remember when he scarcely was seven years of age, that he broke a handsome china vase, for which on the following day he heard his father severely reprimanding the footman. ‘ Do not be angry with Frank,’ said my honest-hearted boy, coming manfully forward, ‘ it was I, and not Frank, who broke the vase.’ - Parents and relatives keep traits such as these treasured up ; it is happy when the promise they afford is realised in after-life.”

“ I am sorry,” said Mrs. Kavanagh, “ that

his fortunes withdraw him from Ireland; I earnestly wish him success in his career."

While the abbess and Mrs. Kavanagh thus conversed, Isabella's eye wandered over the desolate park, and rested on a spot where the rude, neglected avenue emerged from one of the numerous thickets. A thin veil of mist seemed drawn around the spot, and a broken gleam of sunlight coldly fell upon a large old thorn, that overhung the path a few paces apart from the thicket. The effect of light and shadow was extremely beautiful, and riveted the eye of Isabella, who gazed with an attention that was quickened into curiosity, when she saw a horseman issue from among the leafless bushes, and rapidly advance in the direction of the convent. Ere yet he had approached very nearly, his bold and noble bearing, and distinguished form, would have led her to recognise O'Sullivan; but could she have enter-

tained a doubt of his identity, it would have been solved by the spirited ease with which he cleared the wide-sunk fence that surrounded the enclosures of the convent, instead of adopting the more tedious process of dismounting, to apply for the key of the outer gate.

“That is precisely the style,” thought Isabella, “in which I saw him leap the old paddock wall near Castle Kavanagh—he sits his horse exactly as a wild duck sits on the wave of a heaving sea, as free, as careless, as composed.”

While O’Sullivan’s equestrian prowess thus elicited Isabella’s admiration, the portal-bell was rung, and in another instant, his name was announced to the abbess. She rose with alacrity to welcome her nephew; and when he entered the apartment, Isabella felt a deeper colour steal over her face, as she thought of the visions in which Terence O’Leary had so

recently indulged. When the Kavanaghs had greeted him,

“ I have come, aunt,” he said to the abbess, “ to bid you farewell. A few weeks hence, and I leave Ireland. I could not quit the kingdom without the satisfaction of once more beholding you ; — when absent, I shall often think of the peaceful little parlour of Conela.”

“ God bless you; my dear, wherever you go. I am glad to perceive your spirits are not blanked, on the eve of your voyage to a distant hemisphere.”

“ Blanked ? No ! I am full of hope—I trust I shall return to my father’s hall, in a condition that may enable me to restore it to its ancient splendour. I have also a *better* ambition than this;—I must earn the means to pay my father’s debts—I cannot be happy while they are unpaid ; but success or failure rests not with myself—I can only work—

trust me, however, for energy and perseverance."

"Will you go to bid farewell at Martagon," inquired the abbess. To do her every justice, the question was asked in all the artlessness of utter ignorance; nevertheless it called up a conscious glow to the cheek of O'Sullivan, which increased from his intuitive perception that Isabella noticed it.

"That blush reveals all," thought Isabella.

O'Sullivan evaded replying, and somewhat irrelevantly began to praise the superior comfort of the olden fire-places, where the fuel instead of being caged in a grate, was confined by iron *dogs* upon the hearth. Whereupon he assiduously replenished the fire, and examined the curious old mantel-piece, with antiquarian interest. It was, indeed, a strange and monumental looking specimen of ancient handy-work; the upper part was carved in deep relief,

into compartments, in each of which stood the figure of mitred prelate, cowed monk, or mail-clad knight.

Finding her query unanswered, the abbess did not repeat it, but asked if her nephew had recently been at Knockanea.

"He had," he said, "paid his parting respects."

"And how were our friends there occupied?" asked Mrs. Kavanagh.

"Mrs. Mersey was instructing Prince Gruffenhausen and Mr. Jonathan Lucas in philosophy. She quoted Dr. Johnson, to prove that whatever withdraws the mind from the real to the ideal, from the present to the future, advances us in the scale of rational beings. Gruffenhausen said that his own mind was incessantly fixed upon *die Zukunft*."

"And what did Jonathan say?"

"Jonathan said Dr. Johnson was quite right—that every rational man kept his eye on the

future, and that he, Jonathan, was accordingly looking forward to a future cockfight, and training his cocks for it."

"What an admirable application of Dr. Johnson's wisdom!"

"Yes, and extremely characteristic of Jonathan.

"Does Mrs. Mersey engross as much of Baron Leschen's attention as ever?"

"Upon my word, I think she appeared to divide him pretty fairly with Lady Jacintha; so far, at least, as my limited opportunities enabled me to judge. She was taking lessons in *écarté* from the Baron, and appeared quite a novice in the game; which amused me very much, as I was told by a quiet looker on, who knows the widow well, that she is a first rate proficient in *écarté*, and qualified to instruct five hundred Baron Leschens."

"How like her! but no doubt she had

excellent reasons for assuming the raw novice—the widow never acts without a motive.”

“ Well,” said O’Sullivan, “ we may be amused at her dextrous manœuvres, but let us do her justice ; it is allowed, on all hands, that she made a most excellent wife to each of her three husbands.”

“ She must be a very entertaining person,” said the abbess ; “ one generally hears of her saying or doing something piquant.”

“ You may soon have an opportunity of judging for yourself,” replied O’Sullivan, “ for I heard her proposing a tour, in which Conela was certainly to be included. She often amuses herself picking up legends and traditions, and she hears you have stores of them here.”

“ Should she visit me, then,” said the abbess, “ I shall certainly commit her to Terence O’Leary, whose memory is fraught with old

chronicles, and who takes a real pleasure in telling them."

"Poor Terence," said Mrs. Kavanagh, "I must see him; he was a favourite, and very deservedly too, with my husband."

Terence was summoned, and expressed, with warmth, the pleasure he sincerely felt at once more seeing his old mistress. His eye glistened as he gazed on Isabella and O'Sullivan, and he experienced an intensely affectionate interest in both, which may probably be somewhat unintelligible to such of our readers as know not the depth, the devotedness of mingled gratitude and love which binds an old dependant to the family of his hereditary benefactors. This is, alas! a feeling too seldom to be found in our commerce with the world; it is smothered and quenched by the sordid selfishness which generally regulates our social connections. Its excess may be absurd—enthusiastic; but evil is the breast in which it dwells not.

Isabella felt angry with herself for not having more severely reprimanded the unauthorised suggestions of Terence in the cloister; but in Terence there was something that disarmed resentment; his manner, even while uttering the words she thought deserving of rebuke, was at once so respectful, so earnest, and affectionate; his voice, and glance, were so placid and parental; in the recent offering of his orisons to heaven there had been so much of edifying, unaffected piety; and in the train of thinking his brief conversation had developed, there was so much of downright unworldliness and simplicity, that Isabella felt far more inclined to pardon the indiscreet zeal of the enthusiast, than to resent his officiousness. She also made allowance for the licence which, in many parts of Ireland, custom has from time immemorial permitted to ancient dependants; and the result of all these mingled considerations, was the full, free pardon of Terence.

The dusk of evening fell; the relatives conversed on all the subjects suggested by O'Sullivan's approaching departure; the night wore apace; and when the convent clock struck ten, O'Sullivan shook hands with the Kavanaghs, received his aunt's blessing and embrace, and mounting his steed, which Terence had foddered in an out-house, bent his way to the neighbouring village of Kildrummy, where he meant to sleep.

CHAPTER XV.

When the moon is beaming low,
On frozen lake and hills of snow,
Et the sand merrily we go.

OLD SCOTCH BALLAD.

Best independence, oft I bait ye,
How blithe I 'd be to call ye matey !

ROBERT BURNS.

THE pale moon gleamed faintly on the snowy waste, as our hero turned from the convent gate into the park ; and he was spurring forward his horse, when Terence said,

“ Won't your honour please to slacken your pace, and I 'll bear you company ?”

“ I don't care if I do,” said O'Sullivan, dropping the rein on the horse's neck.

“ And now,” said the old man solemnly,

"the time is coming to a point, and you have made up your mind to quit your native country, not knowing what chances may betide you in the far distant land that you're bound for."

"We must trust in God, Terence, and labour and hope for the best."

"And you *will*, then, surely go?"

"Undoubtedly. When did you ever know me change a purpose I had formed after long deliberation?"

"But if you found your purpose was an unwise one," remonstrated Terence, "or, in short, that, on reconsideration, it might be mended?"

"My old friend, I have not yet discovered *that*, nor do I think it likely, either, that I shall. Can a man of my principles and feelings sit quietly down in the consciousness that, although he is protected by an entail, yet creditors have just demands against him? Or, to speak of less important considerations, how

can I bear to remain inactive in a wrecked and ruinous abode, when the exercise of manly vigour, and whatever energy and talent God has given me, may perhaps restore it to its former splendour? And, I ask you, is not this a good reason for going abroad?"

"Undoubtedly, it *would* be one," responded Terence, "provided that you could not pay your father's debts, and restore your ancient house by staying at home."

"How mean you? what prospects are open to me in Ireland?"

"Oh, Sir, do not be angry, I implore you; but I think if a few of Miss Kavanagh's thousands could be spent at Bally-Sullivan, the debts might be paid, the old house repaired, and the lady herself feel no great objection to preside there. What says your honour to the notion?"

"My good Terence, your zeal in my behalf makes you very imaginative. Once for all, it

is utterly impossible — utterly impossible," he fervently repeated, as the sweet confiding smile and lovely form of Lucinda Nugent rose to his memory.

Terence saw at once, from O'Sullivan's tone, that the impossibility was real ; though *why* it should be so, he could not for the life of him conjecture.

" Well, Sir, I often have wished and prayed that you and Miss Kavanagh might fancy each other ; but since it seems you don't, I suppose there's an end of it. But if it *could* be so, I can't but think it would be a quieter, an easier, and altogether a more desirable way of setting the estate to rights, than wandering abroad in quest of fortune's gifts, which are mighty uncertain into the bargain."

O'Sullivan continued silent, but he edified himself with sundry mental encomiums on disinterestedness, and corresponding execrations on the sordid views of fortune-hunters.

“What !” thought he, “owe your fortune to your wife ! How much more congenial to the spirit of a generous husband, were the thought that he presented himself to the lady of his choice, as in all respects her equal ! Pah ! how can a fellow bear the consciousness that his wants are all supplied, not from his own funds, but a woman’s ! How can he bear the reflection that his brooches, his watch-chain, his watch, nay, his very tailor’s bills, are dependant on the strength of his wife’s purse ! pah !”

There are moments, when a train of thought commenced in “sober sadness,” in a mind alive to perceptions of the ludicrous, will end in any thing but sad solemnity.

“Oh, what a horror,” thought our hero, as his mind reverted to Lucinda, “what a horror ! the idea that *she* should pay for *my* inexpressibles !”

It would seem that the reflection had in some mode or other found its way to his lips, for Terence immediately answered,

“ Ay, master ; but it would be a great deal worse if she was to *wear* them.”

“ How quick your ears are, you old rascal ! I did not intend you to hear that.”

“ Then speak lower the next time,” said Terence, “ for my ears are not wooden, I assure your honour. But if your high spirit scorns the thought of being under obligations to a wife, I must say that your honour has a poor opinion of the women. They are tender-hearted, generous souls, and never are so happy as when they are of service to the men they love.”

Terence continued to talk until they reached the village ; where O’Sullivan, consigning himself to the comforts afforded by the little inn’s best bed-room, sought respite in a few hours’ slumber, from the varied and harassing anxieties that crowded on his mind.

* * * * *

At an early hour on the following morning, Isabella and her mother left Conela on their route to Dublin. Notwithstanding the discouragement of Sister Martha, the former felt her penchant for a conventual life return very strongly, as she quitted the precincts of the lonely, quiet convent, to re-enter the busy and unsatisfying scenes of social life.

“ Brief as has been my sojourn at Conela,” thought she, “ it has left an indelible impression.”

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